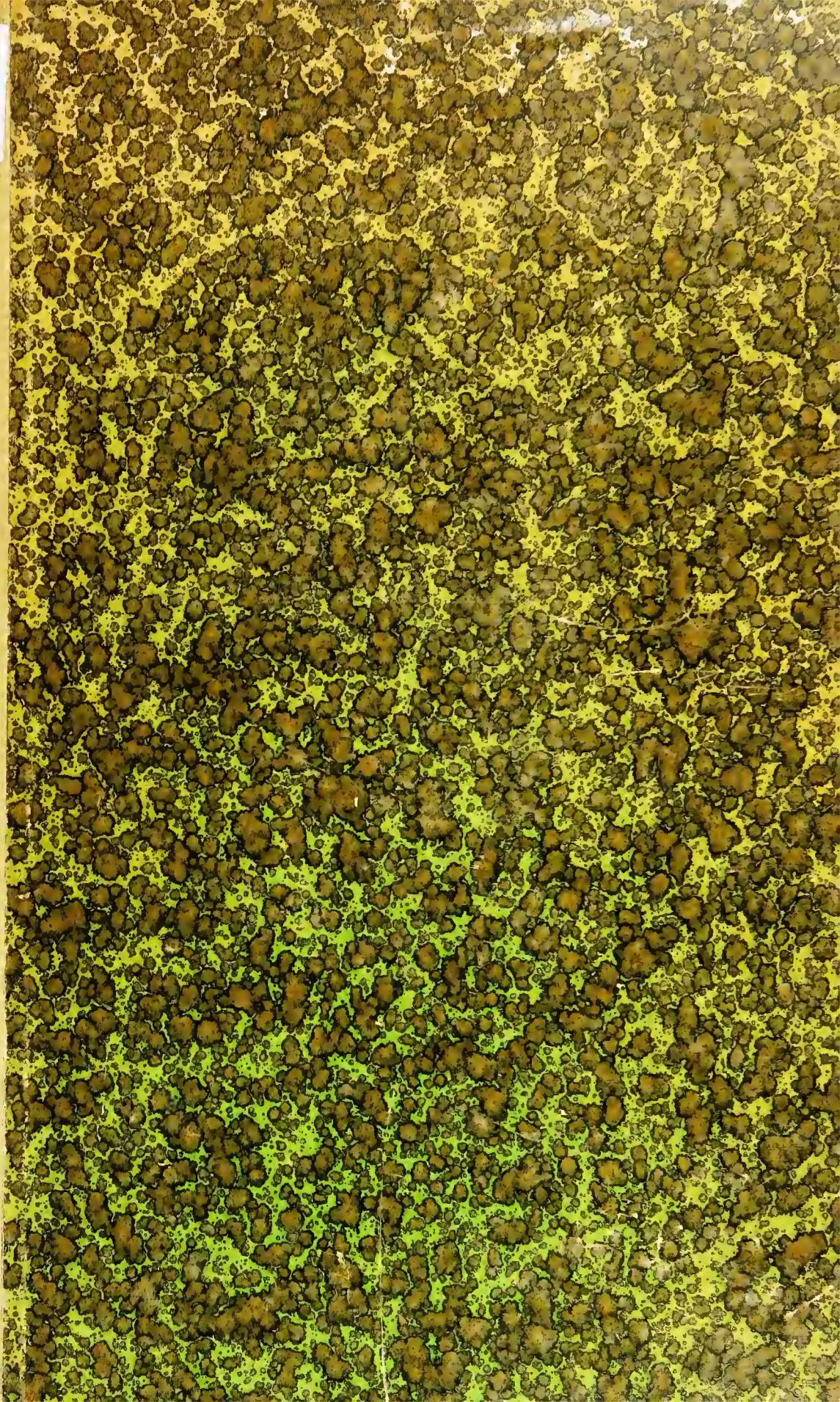
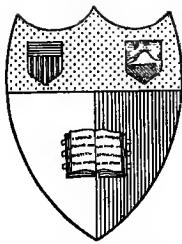


2115  
25  
.7





**Cornell University**

*Ithaca, New York*

---

**COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE**

**LIBRARY**

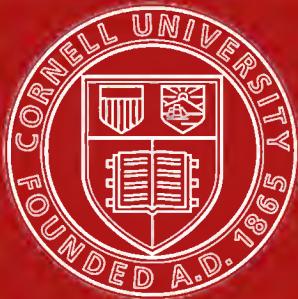
Cornell University Library  
NK 2115.P25A7

The art of home furniehing and decoratio



3 1924 019 525 470

fine



# Cornell University Library

The original of this book is in  
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in  
the United States on the use of the text.

THE ART of  
HOME FURNISHING  
and DECORATION  
by  
Frank Alvah Parsons



# THE ART OF HOME FURNISHING AND DECORATION

By

**FRANK ALVAH PARSONS**

President, New York School of Fine and Applied Art  
Author of "Interior Decoration—Its Principles and  
Practice," Etc.

Published by

**ARMSTRONG CORK COMPANY**  
LINOLEUM DEPARTMENT  
LANCASTER, PA., U. S. A.  
L. L.

A-811

Copyright 1918 by  
**ARMSTRONG CORK COMPANY**  
Linoleum Department  
Lancaster - Pennsylvania

## FOREWORD

Frank Alvah Parsons, President of the New York School of Fine and Applied Art, is the foremost American authority on interior decoration. He long since has amply demonstrated his wonderful faculty for turning his knowledge to the common good. We know of no man who, with voice and pen, has fought harder or more unceasingly for better taste, for richer, fuller home life.

Mr. Parsons hardly can seem a stranger to the average reader of this book. Indeed, through his writings and lectures, he has become guide and counsellor and the personal friend of thousands of refined men and women, who have accepted the idea so well developed by Mr. Parsons in the following pages, that "Man is what he lives in;" that, generally speaking, man can be no greater or no less than the daily environment in which he works, thinks and lives.

We take great satisfaction and pleasure in announcing Mr. Parsons as the author of that section of this book which is entitled "The Art of Home Furnishing and Decoration." It is written in Mr. Parsons' typically intimate and forceful style, and every paragraph is replete with information and suggestions of great value. We are sure that this book will hold your interest from the first to the last word, and that in the end you will look on the possibilities of your home and your life within it in a fresh and considerably enlarged perspective.

After you have spent an hour with Mr. Parsons on the *general* theme of home furnishing and decoration, we believe that it will profit you to read what is written by ourselves in the latter part of the book on the specific subject of linoleum and its relation to the principles that Mr. Parsons has laid down.



# THE ART OF HOME FURNISHING AND DECORATION

Frank Alvah Parsons

Man is exactly what he lives in, for environment is the strongest possible factor in man's development. One may be so long among loud noises, bad odors, inharmonious colors and wrong arrangements of things that one doesn't mind them, because one has let them become an integral part of one's self. They are there, and they are as bad as they were at first, but one has become immune to them. This being admitted, it follows, of course, that concordant sounds, agreeable odors, harmonious colors and pleasing arrangements have their immediate effects, but their tendency is toward refinement, culture and artistic appreciation instead of toward brutality, ignorance and indifference.

It is certainly not hard to see what effect is produced by living in any wrong environment. As a person accustoms himself to it, he becomes like it. When he is like it, he will admire only its kind, and whatever he does will be as nearly like his environment as he himself is.

The importance of thoroughly comprehending this truth cannot be overstated. The mental and artistic quality of the nation and even its physical comfort depend upon it. This viewpoint, being somewhat new to us, accounts for the upheaval in our ideas of what a home really is. Looking a little into this matter may perhaps stimulate us still further in our thinking, which will affect our way of doing whatever we attempt in the future.

**The Home Molded Our Tastes and Lives** In the first place the home is the center of all life's activities. We are born there, and long before we have seen the shop, the office, the church or even the school, our first impressions of the fundamentals of life have become fixed. These are exceedingly hard to efface.

The school can hardly hope to counteract in the child's mind the effect of hearing incorrect language spoken at home for six years; the church is greatly handicapped in its influence where wrong principles of life have determined habits during the first years;

the artistic sense is practically dead and refinement of taste impossible in that child whose parents have given the usual wall papers, rugs, hangings, pictures and other objects of modern furnishing a chance to do their unrestricted work. Most of these have been made to sell, but not to people who use any judgment in buying. Occasionally we think of the durability or the comfort of an article, but how seldom of the colors, the patterns, the combinations of different periods with different meanings, all of which unite to make an unthinkable, inharmonious jumble which produces a reaction on an impressionable person little short of criminal. This being the case, is it any wonder that we are satisfied with inferior things or that we cannot compete with other nations in creating better ones?

This view of the home as an educator places it above any other institution in life and makes it worthy of the most careful and scientific study from several points of view. It might be well to consider here four of the most important of these.

**Home Must Satisfy the Body** The first requisite of a house is physical comfort. Not only is this true of each article of furniture, but it is true also of the placing of each piece as it relates to the other pieces.

Take, for instance, a divan, a chair, a table, a lamp, some books and a footstool. It is not enough that the chair, the divan and the stool should each be comfortable to the body, but comfort demands that each be so placed that one can use the divan or chair with the stool, while the books on a table with a lamp are placed so that one may lounge or sit and read without effort and without expending energy to assemble what is required. The best possible arrangement, you see, demands more skill than at first appears.

**Home Must Satisfy the Mind** *Mental comfort* is even more important to man in his home than physical comfort. He must, or should, find in his home an intellectual stimulus and a refining influence to complement the activities and struggles of his life outside, to calm and rest the tired nerves and to relieve the material or commercial stress which threatens

entirely to destroy his power to see or know anything else. Unconsciously driven by this need he rushes from home to the club, to the theatre or elsewhere for diversion, amusement or rest. This is not as it should be, for in the right environment the home should furnish the rest and intellectual refreshment needed. Let us consider that there must be an expenditure of thought and skill in furnishing a home if it is to play its rightful part in the scheme of life.

**Home Must Be Sanitary** Even then, there is another thing to consider. A man may succeed in accomplishing wonders in the realm of physical comfort, yet so completely ignore the question of sanitation as to menace the health of his family, if not to offend their sense of decent cleanliness. The horrors of Victorian plush upholstery, chenille portieres and nailed-down carpets are still fresh in the memory of some of us, and we have not yet been able to get a clear idea of a really clean thing because of the bad impression made on us by these conditions. Probably we never shall, until we succeed in effacing their memory by discarding the traditions they represent and adopting wholly different ideas in their places. Let us think of the question of *sanitation* as a second necessity in considering any household problem.

**Costly Things Not Always Best** It is perhaps unnecessary to look at this matter from the viewpoint of economics, but to me it seems very important. We cannot all afford to buy everything we see, desire or even appreciate. Realizing this, we lose enthusiasm and take almost anything. This is not necessary, nor is it wise. Good things are not all costly, nor are all cheap things equally bad. One might also add that frequently very costly things incline to be bad; at any rate, there is far greater danger of their being so because of the greater opportunity they afford for the expression of bad taste.

Knowledge furnishes the greatest defense against bad things in any form. The more one knows, the more capable he is of selecting the best for his money and of using his selections in

such a way as to suggest that much more was paid for them than they really cost.

**An Artistic Home Means Enjoyable Living** Intelligent selection—the art of buying the most appropriate furnishings and decorations for the home—leads logically to intelligent decoration, the art of arranging the furnishings and decorations so as to make possible a thoroughly attractive home and keenly enjoyable living for the family.

The introduction of the word “Art” always opens up a new field fraught with unpleasant possibilities. So many things masquerade under this name that we are almost deceived as to what it really is. Shall we not attack and dispose of some of these fallacies before attempting to see what it actually is?

Because it is an art to *decorate* we are apt to think that anything attached to or hung on to another thing is decoration, therefore artistic. Nothing could be further from the truth. Principles control decoration, and decoration is only possible when it conforms to these principles. In order to be decorative there must be something that requires decoration; that is, which is incomplete in itself. As soon as material of any kind is added after a thing is complete, the result becomes an aggregation, not a decoration.

Most houses belong to this class because the owner refuses to stop when he is done. He may also have erred through having no place to decorate, his background being of such a kind that, struggle as it might, nothing could compete for attention, therefore could not become decorative by contrast. Simplicity in backgrounds is the foundation of decorative possibility.

**No Room for Sentimentality** Oversentimentality is as bad as overdecoration. Sentiment is not only commendable but is an essential element that makes for human decency, but *sentimentality*, which by most people is thought to be the same thing, is unpleasant and unhealthy. Admiration, affection, veneration—each of these qualities has its place with all of us in its particular situation. This is well; but when, through association, we mistake an impersonal object for the

real qualities of a person and begin to bestow adoration on it, then it is time to stop and think.

To be sure, one respects some things in his grandfather and his other forebears. He is not insensible to the excellent points in his friends and associates. But if he is a wise man, he does not apply all his grandfather's good qualities to all the furniture he uses, nor the excellent points in his friends to all the objects they have felt impelled to give him at one time or another for some sort of reason. If half the rubbish in every house in America that exists for solely sentimental reasons or because of a fear of being detected in its destruction were to be burned now, the next generation would have a much clearer vision of what art is, unhampered by sentimental misconception.

A sentimental and an æsthetic feeling are quite distinct from each other. Who is there among us who does not love *nature*? The trees, the birds, the flowers—they seem to be a part of the great Divine scheme which calls for especial appreciation. This is also well; but nature is not art, neither is man's imitation of it. Sometimes his interpretation of it is art, sometimes it is not. Not infrequently his conventionalization of nature and its adaptation to the material in which it is to be used become a decorative art; yet, even if this is accomplished, the thing may be spoiled in the use, and an inartistic whole may result. Just and reasonable homage to nature has impelled people to try in all sorts of ways to imitate it. This is not *art*. *Art is creation*, not imitation. One has but to reflect, and amazement must result when one realizes to what this impulse has led in every field of expression. Flowers have been painted on everything known, from the kitchen floor to the plush sofa pillow. The more like nature these decorations have appeared, the more artistic they were thought to be, when the truth was actually the reverse. The more natural these are, the more inappropriate they are as seen from any viewpoint.

**Art is Creative** Who is there that would not hesitate to sit down on, or put his foot on, a perfectly natural rose or lily? Where is there a human being that would care to lie down on a pillow with the painted face, even of an Indian,

in the center? Who can see nature insulted in various objects by the sticking-in of pins or the driving-in of nails? The whole thing is too simple. Nature has its place, but it is not art, nor is the imitation of it art.

This is so intimately associated with another fallacy that it should suggest it without comment. The appetites of man are ever insistent for attention. The desire for food, drink, shelter —these are physical appetites. They make their assertions naturally, and when normally treated bear their relation to the rest of life. But neither these nor the sensations attendant on them are art, nor should these senses be confounded with the artistic sense.

Apples and pears look well on trees, in suitable receptacles or on tables. They are to eat. Imitations of them painted on plates seem to win admiration at once for their likeness to the real thing. The saliva flows in the mouth, the digestive organs begin their natural functions, and, while our sensations are purely physical, strangely enough many think this artistic. It is the hunger appetite being appeased, not the æsthetic.

The atrocities committed in this field are innumerable. Exact copies of everything, from a bunch of grapes to an ostrich, may be found in one winter's millinery display, while the real or copied forms of everything, from a dried fish to a gigantic moose head, may be seen in one dining-room at one time. This is not art. It is natural history and botany illustration in museum effect.

**All Pictures Not Good**      The hardest thing in the world to combat is a universal belief in the infallibility of pictures. These are necessary to convey ideas and they

have a function to perform. They are interesting, they may even be amusing, but they are by no means always artistic. So great has been the belief in and admiration for pictures, that we have, as a nation, pretty nearly surrendered to the idea that drawing and picture-making alone are art. No greater mistake than this has ever been made. There are a thousand more bad pictures than there are good ones and a hundred bad ones used

in houses where one good one appears. This is because we seem to have a kind of fear that there may be a vacant place on the wall and also because the picture idea has become a mania.

"Silence is golden," but a blank space on a wall is often diamonds and emeralds compared to one filled with the average pictures that are hung, not to mention their frames. What shall we say of this phase of human dissipation, particularly when the frames in question are gilt ones? A person who allows himself to decorate his house with picture frames instead of pictures should be expected to hang his wardrobe in the front hall for the same purpose. The results of this mania should not be charged up to the credit side of art. Rather, the man afflicted with it is a slave to tradition.

For the most difficult thing in the world is for a person to change his established way of thinking or of doing anything. It is so much easier to think as one's grandfather did and to do as one's father did than it is to think and do for one's self. For this reason we are somewhat handicapped in getting at the essence of art and its practical applications to ordinary life. If mahogany was the favored wood in the last half of the eighteenth century, of course it is a good idea to use it for anything, anywhere, forever afterward, even though a much better substitute is at hand. If floors were hardwood or soft wood or stone, or even plastered with Oriental rugs bearing no relation to the rest of the house, there seems to be no reason why people should change the rugs or have another kind of floor.

Examples of this adherence to tradition are so frequent and so deadly that to cite more would be a waste of time. Traditional belief that antiques are always good or that the work of some particular man is forever praiseworthy or that some particular article should always be used in some established way, has blinded us to the possibilities in the right use of new things in a progressive way. All this hinders a clear perception of what art really is.

If these things which have been misnamed art are carefully removed from consciousness permanently, it is easy enough to

see what art is, and then it becomes almost an unconscious process to apply it, whether the application is made to the house, to clothes or to other personal forms of expression.

**Art is Expressing Yourself** In the first place, art is creation. It is the personal expression of the individual in any material or combination that completely conveys his conception of what he is trying to project.

This connection generally expresses a need which he himself feels. It may be for a house, a living-room, a divan, a hat, a footstool, a typewriter or an automobile. In any case, there is a need for something for a particular use. This need should be the reason for the art expression. Spurred on by the need, a man creates something which will fill the need.

This need is both functional or material and mental or artistic. One bar to seeing what art is rests in not recognizing this two-fold element in it. Insofar as one is able to make a chair that fits the body, fulfils its special function as a dining-room chair, or a study chair, he has succeeded in creating the first artistic element. An object which does not do honestly and truthfully and sensibly what it purports to do cannot be artistic, no matter

**Art is Beauty** The second element that enters into art is appearance or beauty. This element or quality is a little more difficult to define because it is relative, just as heat is, or as goodness is. What seems warm to one seems cold to another; what seems good to one may be bad to some one else; so, then, the standard of beauty depends entirely upon one's own conception of it. This does not mean that anything that anybody considers beautiful is so, any more than it means that it is a warm day when the thermometer is at zero because somebody does not feel cold. It simply means that the person who judges may or may not have a right mental standard of what beauty really is. This standard may be acquired approximately by anyone, for it is determined by certain principles. If the principles of harmony are understood and applied, beauty will result.

### **The Function of a Room**

Take, for instance, the problem of a particular room. The first question to ask one's self is: "What is this room for?" If it is a dining-room, it is a place in which to eat in peace. If it is a living-room, it is to live in and should have a quiet, restful, refined and otherwise pleasant atmosphere. If it is a bedroom, it is to rest and sleep in. From whatever standpoint the room is viewed, the question of *use* comes first. Anything in the dining-room that interferes with eating in peace is in bad taste. Whatever appears as decoration in the living-room that is unrestful, tawdry, common or unessential, is inartistic. If the bedroom contains anything that is out of tone with its general spirit, if it contains anything that makes for other than an atmosphere of calm contentment and deep, sound sleep, it should be removed at once. Let this point of view spur us on to make an investigation of our houses—room by room—and alter or remove everything that strikes a jarring note.

Let us start with the bedroom. Are there spotted fabrics or papers on the wall, the spots on which one involuntarily counts, even after going to sleep? Are there a half dozen small pictures in black frames against a white background, so hung that successive steps are formed which resemble the front hall stairs? Are there other diverting and disturbing arrangements in the room that seem to invite us to close our eyes to avoid further annoyance? Much can be done in house decoration by elimination, and the strongest argument for this process will be found in submitting each room to the test as to the performance of its proper function.

### **The Language of Art**

These elements, *fitness to use* and *beauty*, which when combined make what is called the art of quality, must be made comprehensible by facts and truths which can be expressed in a language form that all may learn to understand. This art language is made up of color, form, line and texture, and depends for its efficiency on a knowledge of the principles which govern it and upon an appreciation for the niceties in its use. Anyone can learn the principles and will grow in appreciation as he makes a right use of what he knows.

Of the qualities mentioned, color is the most interesting; at least, it is the easiest to see. At the same time it is the most misused. This is much too small a space in which to demonstrate with any thoroughness the color language idea, but two or three of the most important facts must be emphasized.

**Use of  
Color to Express  
Personality**

Nothing is more personal than color and nothing admits of expressing personality with clearer or more manifest charm. The normal colors—yellow, red, blue, green, orange and violet—may be used in illustration of this statement.

Color has its source in light, and natural light comes from the sun. Yellow looks most like the sun, as it expresses the quality that the sun seems to give out. From the sun we are cheered, made light-hearted and receive new life. Yellow in a room should, under normal conditions, produce the same feelings where it is the basis for the wall color or is used in curtains or in other spots. Red suggests blood and fire. It is associated with activity, aggression and passion. It heats and stimulates. One who fails to react to color is not normal or is immune from overcontact, while one who simply likes or dislikes a color and, therefore, uses it or never does, misses the real chance to express ideas. If one prefers red, there is no proof in the fact that makes it incumbent on him to live surrounded by it. He may be erratic enough without it, or possibly he doesn't need a stimulant. Need is the fundamental question rather than liking. It is a question of what one ought to have.

It is interesting to know that the aggressive quality of red makes a room in which it is used smaller in appearance, and there are times when this is not desirable. Its warming quality is not needed in hot climates or during a warm season.

Blue has an opposite effect from red. Its reactions are restraint, coolness, repose and distance. By association one thinks of a clear blue sky and the cool breezes from the blue waters of the ocean. This makes blue a suitable antidote for hot weather and a temperate force, useful in modifying some people's dispositions. Green, which is a union of yellow and blue, expresses the qual-

ties of both. Nothing could be more restful, soothing and agreeable than the cheering and cooling effects of a seat in the shade upon the green grass under luxuriant green trees, in the middle of a hot day. It is easy to see the practical application of this in decorative art.

Violet or purple has the qualities of red and blue, while orange has the qualities of yellow and red. It is interesting to study the natural reactions shown by people of all ages and conditions to these colors as environments under different mental conditions. Incomplete as these suggestions are, they are probably sufficient to establish the point that personal qualities or individual character traits can be definitely expressed in color terms and that antidotes for an excess of certain qualities are just as possible where a knowledge of color exists.

There is a second color quality that we must not ignore. If I think of one group of colors containing light pink, delicate blue, lavender, canary yellow and white as representing one idea, and dark crimson, heavy, dark green, blue with a rich, dark purple and black as another group, I have a basis for comparison. If my problem of expression is the qualities that we generally attribute to youth, or the proper colors for a young girl's bedroom, or for the lighter and more delicate things in life, I have no hesitation in choosing the first group. If, on the other hand, the problem is one of clothes for a person of mature age, or a color scheme for a library in an old English house, or some other problem in which the qualities required are dignity, quietness and stability, there should be no question as to the preference for the second group.

This quality of light and darkness in color is called *value* and must not be forgotten in using color as a language.

There is no doubt that the third quality, called *intensity*, is the most important of all to a right understanding of interior decoration. This quality determines how brilliant or how forceful a color tone is. Softer and less aggressive tones are called *neutral* or *neutralized colors*. The most important question in using color decoratively is that which relates to the distribution

and correct placing of neutralized colors in their relation to the more intense ones. The grossest errors in the whole realm of color used in decoration are committed in this field. One or two principles that relate to this matter must always be carefully observed: "Backgrounds should be less intense in color than objects that are to appear against them in any decorative way." From this it obviously follows that walls, ceilings and floors of houses must be less intense in color than hangings, upholsteries, small rugs, pictures and other decorative material. This is one of the most important points to remember in every color problem.

There is a corollary to this which is equally important: "The larger the color area the less intense it should be, and the smaller the area, the more intense it may be." According to this principle, hangings and large rugs must be less intense in color than sofa cushions, lamp shades and decorative bits of pottery and other materials. Keeping this relation of areas in mind is an aid in selecting any article for the house, as well as a help in choosing those things that are concerned with one's personal appearance. A red necktie is more appealing than a red suit, so is a red flower or ribbon more decorative on a black hat than a gray one would be on a red hat.

The slightest attempt at using color must disclose its power to express personality, its natural value feeling and its decorative dependence upon a proper distribution of intensities.

#### **Use of Form to Express Ideas**

While the principles of form are a little less apparent in their illustration to most of us than color, yet they are no less important in producing a harmonious whole. One of the first premises of decoration is the assumption that there is a definite form or shape upon which a decoration is to be applied. The direction of the bounding lines of this form determines the direction of the principal lines of the decorative matter which is to be applied on it.

The bounding lines of a floor are generally straight and at right angles to each other. This fixes several important points regard-

ing the disposition of rugs and furniture. Rugs that are placed at all sorts of angles on the floor and by their positions bid one go in any direction save the one he started to take are among the most disconcerting and distracting lines in a room arrangement. Place all rugs in accord with the bounding lines of a room and harmony is at once restored.

One must conform to this principle also in placing furniture. Most pieces should be parallel with the sides of the room, even though they are not against the walls. Curved line chairs or other small objects sometimes lend themselves naturally to a diagonal placement. Care should be taken in grouping furniture to give the appearance of harmony with the room structure. Let us look after the piano that is placed catacorner in the living-room and the bed, in the same position, in the bedroom.

It is not unusual to see pictures strung over the walls in such a way that the line indicated from the top of one to another is a zigzag that illy suggests harmony with the structure of the wall. Triangular picture wires are ugly and distracting. Unless a picture is small enough to be hung with an invisible attachment at the back, it should be hung with one long wire passed through two screw eyes, one at each top corner of the frame, with one wire paralleling each side of the frame and going over a hook above. This not only harmonizes the wire with the frame, but with the doors, windows and the room structure.

The choice and arrangement of essential materials in the room, so far as the aspect of beauty is concerned, will be treated in detail later on.

**Size and Shape  
of Objects a  
Factor**

The principle of consistently related shapes and sizes finds scores of applications in the arrangement of a room. Who has not wondered what to do with a round clock, when everything else adjacent to it was either square or rectangular in form? Where is there a house in which there is not a round or oval picture to be placed, or a chair of wholly curved lines, where all others are straight? The attempt to place one isolated round object on a wall is generally a failure, because there is

nothing to relate it to any other nearby lines. Oval and curved objects must be repeated by others similar in form in other positions in the room if they are to become in any sense a part of the design.

The second part of this principle—consistent sizes—is even more important and far-reaching than the first. To the architect, the decorator or the creator of any art object, this is a vital matter. Every interior, as well as exterior, architectural feature is thought of in relation to every other one in the matter of size.

It is not uncommon to enter a room and find a chimney large enough for an Elizabethan banquet hall, while the room itself, in size, suggests a city flat. Nor is it less common to find a table or divan of gigantic proportions being required to live in harmony with chairs or other articles of various pigmy types. These unusual and unhappy relationships cannot conform to the principle of consistent sizes.

In our use of hangings, upholstery, rugs, etc., the lack of feeling for consistent sizes is still more often apparent. Before discussing this, let us look for a moment at patterns and motifs as they are used in textiles, wall papers and rugs.

For some unknown reason we have come to believe that there is no beauty in anything in which there is not a pattern plainly visible, forgetting that three-fourths of all wall and floor spaces are backgrounds on which to show other more important things, including people, who have some right to be exploited even against wall paper. There are some phases of the motif running through a design, that may be considered here in some detail.

There are three distinct varieties of motif. First, the motif which aims to reproduce identically a natural object. Such things are rarely successful. The second is known as the abstract type, where the motif is of a form and color not derived from a natural source, being a matter of space and line arrangement, often resulting in geometric forms. The third, known as the conventional motif, takes a natural thing and attempts to translate it into form and color suited by its appearance and feeling to some particular material in which the design is developed.

In the conventional design, beauty is attained by harmonizing the motif with the material on which the design is made, while the naturalistic motif strives to represent some natural thing and takes a chance on its being appropriate in the material in which it is to be rendered. Harmony in motifs means, first, a relation in this particular, from which it follows that a rug or floor which is entirely geometric in pattern cannot be used successfully with hangings which show a purely naturalistic design.

Another opportunity for harmony is found in consistently related motifs as to size and shape. It frequently happens that the floor motif, for example, is small and delicate in size and refined in line treatment. If a person is naturally sensitive to color rather than form and he finds a rug or hangings pleasing in color, he is often satisfied. For harmony in relationship, however, he must ask if the motif in the rug and that in the hangings are consistent in size and shape with the floor and wall motifs.

**Elements  
in a Room Must  
Balance**

A third principle of form is known as *balance*. This is the principle of arrangement whereby attractions are equalized and through this equalization a restful feeling is obtained; that is, a feeling of equilibrium or safety. It is somewhat disconcerting to enter a small room and find a black piano across one corner and a delicate Hepplewhite chair in the opposite corner. One instinctively rushes to the aid of the chair. Attraction may be of color, size, shape or texture, and one learns only by constant practice to see and feel the attraction forces in different objects used.

There are two types of balance to consider. The first one, known as *bi-symmetric* balance, is the equalization of attractions on either side of a vertical center by using objects the same size, shape, color and texture. This is formal, dignified and safe, but lacks in some ways the delicacy and subtlety resulting from an attempt to get a less formal placing. Consider a vertical line drawn through the center of a chimney-piece placed in the middle of a wall space. On either side of the chimney-piece and equally distant from it may be placed two pictures similar in

size, form and color, and the result is bi-symmetrical. If two similar candlesticks are placed one at either end of the chimney-piece and equidistant from the end, with a portrait in the center, there is still bi-symmetric arrangement. So long as this arrangement is maintained, bi-symmetry results.

A second kind of balance is known as *occult* balance. This term is used to signify that the balance is rather felt or sensed than exactly determined. If the same vertical line is drawn through the same chimney-piece, one picture is placed a certain distance from the left and two smaller pictures of unequal size are used on the right to balance this. The two pictures must be so placed that their attraction equals that of the larger one at the left. Similarly, if one large porcelain jar and two or three other articles are to be used, there must be a feeling of equal attraction on either side of the vertical line.

To explain briefly the primary laws of balance we may give the rules: "Equal attractions balance each other at equal distances from the center." And, conversely: "Unequal attractions balance each other at unequal distances from the center."

A third and a little more complicated law is stated as follows: "Unequal attractions balance each other at distances from the center which are in inverse ratio to their powers of attraction." Translated, this means that objects with the strongest attractions tend to gravitate toward the central line, while less attractive ones tend to draw from this line.

The application of the rules of balance not only to objects on the wall, but to the furniture when seen against the wall or against the floor, is essential to room composition. It is also essential that the floor, in its general appearance, should bear a balanced relation to the walls and to the hangings.

There is no better place, perhaps, than at this point to make clear the relations of these three bounding surfaces. The ceiling should be unobtrusive, but keyed in color to the rest of the room. A perfectly white ceiling, except in a white room, or an over-ornamented ceiling anywhere is an annoyance to him

who would see his friends or furnishings. A too-aggressive wall paper or other wall covering makes a bid for attention quite out of proportion to its rights as a background, while aggressive and over-assertive floors or rugs are in bad taste, particularly when they assume the prerogatives of the hostess in their attempt at attraction.

The ceiling should be about as much lighter and less attractive than the walls, as the walls are lighter and less attractive than the floor. This is a balanced arrangement of ceilings, walls and floors.

**“Crawly” Pictures and Patterns Are Bad** Operating exactly opposite to the principle of balance is one known as *movement*. This is calculated to cause unrest, excitement and similar sensations, by creating an interest

which causes the eye to move from one thing to another. It is very desirable in many cases that movement, particularly of a violent type, should not occur. Allusion to stair arrangements in picture hangings has already been made. This is not conducive to sleep. Erratic crawling vine patterns, creeping up the curtains or the wall paper, are a little suggestive in the early morning hours if one chances to awake. Violent contrasting lines, created by bad furniture placing or by spotted wall papers or floor covering, also become tiresome and disturbing, except to those who by long contact with such things have become immune to their influence. Even such may suffer a subconscious disturbance, though they do not realize it.

There is a certain monotony attendant on the continual presentation of one sound, one color or one form, for mental consideration. On the other hand, there is a complete disorganization of the powers of the human mind if a host of colors, forms or sounds are presented at one time. If one is poverty, the other is certainly gluttony, and neither should be accepted. It is through a judicious selection and arrangement that sufficient variety is obtained to give pleasure, while restraint results in making life humanly possible. It is very rarely that we err on the side of simplicity, but it is not at all unlikely that we may become flagrantly sumptuous, with an uncomfortable, tawdry result.

**Emphasize Only Important Things in a Room** The principle known as *emphasis* is one which we must regard as important. In a bedroom one ought to see a bed; it is vastly more

important than the picture exhibition hung about it. In a dining-room a well-set table is the emphatic note, not the chenille curtains nor the products of the chase hung upon the wall. In the living-room the easy-chair, the divan, the book-case, the beautiful portrait, lamp or picture—all these things should be emphasized by color, form or line, that their importance as related to other things in the room may be apparent at sight.

Knowing this to be true, is it not strange that we still find people who are willing to emphasize the wall paper or the floor or the unpleasant ceiling decorations, to the absolute exclusion of anything else that may have to be used in the room? The relation of background to decorative objects cannot be insisted upon too much.

**The Spirit of the Whole House Should Be the Spirit of Each Room**

The final principle of form is known as *unity*. In this limited discussion only a word can be said of it. A room is a unit, so should a house be. It is impossible to look with equanimity from an Old English dining-room into a Louis XVI sitting-room. These styles are

very far apart in their meaning and can only be harmonized by those who know how, when, where and how much of each element to use.

It is just as impossible to make a unit out of a mixture of Fifteenth, Seventeenth and Nineteenth Century furniture, unless one knows how. Every article used in furnishing a house not only has its conventional value, but its design also. If one knows thoroughly the exact meaning and power of a Louis XVI chair, an Elizabethan table, an Italian console or a William and Mary bookcase, there is no doubt that these may be used successfully in one room.

There are so many considerations in such a problem that it is insufficient to choose single objects for their value alone. Each thing must be chosen with a clear understanding of what room it is to go in and with what other things it is in the future to

be associated. A failure to do this will certainly result in pandemonium.

What shall we do with the things we have? Use them if we have to, destroy them if we are willing to—at least eliminate everything that is nonessential. The pernicious practice of giving everything one learns to dislike or that has become worn out, to the poor, does more to prevent them from enjoying a personal growth than any other one thing.

Perhaps no better way to think of the principle of unity can be suggested than to quote the definition of an eminent Nineteenth Century historian: "A unit is that to which nothing can be added and from which nothing can be taken without interfering materially with the idea itself."

**Objects Should  
Look the Way  
They Feel**

The question of *texture* as a form of expression must not be omitted. Texture is that quality of an object which seems to convey the idea of how it feels. It is a combination of a degree of solidity, strength, roughness, coarseness, etc. One finds this quality in the grained effects of wood, in the weaves of different textiles, in the appearance of braided straws, and even in feathers and other materials.

It is this sense of fitness in textural feeling that forbids the use of hard, harsh-grained oaks with the finer textures of mahogany and satin-wood. Disregarding this quality, people often combined the coarser, heavier and more-resisting woolens or linens with soft, impressionable and destructible silks or fine cottons. Harmony in the texture quality cannot fail to contribute to harmony in the finished unit.

Such is the language of art expression in color, form, line and texture. The principles which govern the right selection and combination of all materials that go to make a house are the real guides to growth in artistic appreciation.

**Good Taste the  
Final Criterion**

Good taste, which is the final criterion in all art, is cultivated or improved in most people by a constant study and application of the principles which control artistic expression.

Should we not, all of us, do well often to take time to remind ourselves of certain great established principles and to endeavor constantly to see more clearly and completely the principles that govern the expression of these truths? Thereby we may unconsciously form habits of thinking and of doing things that will not only make for broader and better personal growth, but will contribute to a higher type of national civilization. We have not to worry if all the powers of science are not directed to the development of so-called efficient service, in lines that are wholly material and commercial.

We are extraordinarily committed to this propaganda, as a people, and we might ask ourselves whether we may not be developing this idea at the expense of mental and spiritual ideals that, after all, are the real things that not only determine what we actually are, but are the only things that are truly permanent. Life is certainly something beside machinery, raw materials and money, even granting these to be essentials.

If we will acknowledge this dual claim of commercial materialism and a better mental or spiritual ideal, we shall find no difficulty in seeing that materials can only be refined and made better in quality through their possession of the art quality, and this art quality is only a harmonious relation of each of the elements used to express any idea, in any field in which a man is working.

Perceiving the desirability of the art quality results generally in an effort to possess it, and that entails immediate action in two distant ways. First, go out to find the simple, fundamental principles that control the language of color, form, line and texture; second, apply these principles at once in the home, in the shop, in clothes, in printed paper or in any concrete thing where interest and possibility are found. Through every application growth is assured.

**Influence  
of Environment** Let us again remember that man is exactly what he lives in, for environment is the strongest possible factor in man's development. Let us not forget that what man really is, is what his mind is, and this he must express in all he does.

This places the importance of the home where it deserves to be and makes its furnishing one of the most serious and at the same time one of the most delightful things in life, never for an instant minimizing what has always been desirable, but vastly enlarging and ennobling the idea for which it stood.

In recognizing anew the part art is to play in this matter, let us not forget that it in no way interferes with the three essential qualities that are inevitably factors in every home problem simple or elaborate, as the case may be.

Perfect physical comfort is necessary, if only from the standpoint of more efficient service on our part and the relief it brings us, not to be constantly thinking how hard the bed is, how uncomfortable the chair seems, or how rough and uneven the floor feels. Art in no way interferes with physical comfort; in fact, it demands it, as an element of the eternal fitness of things.

The nation is awake to the power of cleanliness as a factor in making an efficient physical, and thereby, indirectly, a finer mental being, as a contribution to modern civilization. Every article selected for the home should have this requirement considered. Including this in the art idea will remove the misapprehension under which some people labor, that art implies disorder at home, a dowdy or unkempt person and a disregard of nature's most obvious laws. The first law of Heaven is order; it is no less so of art.

Expense is the constant excuse of those who want better things but cannot afford them. There are as many bad expensive things as there are cheap ones. No home is too poor to have much better things, much better arranged, than it has, and no home is so rich that much of the furnishing might not well be publicly burned and the rest rearranged.

Tradition binds most of us in absolute servitude. Let us not be afraid to try a new thing used in a new way. That makes for creative growth, which is art.

From any standpoint, comfort, sanitation, economics or art, the home is to become the greatest moulding influence in human life. Shall we remain apathetic and indifferent to this most

vital problem satisfied to increase our bank account only, or shall we awaken now and contribute our mite to a fuller national life and a higher and happier existence? This certainly will not decrease our power to increase the bank account, but will enable us to do it with far less physical effort.

**Floor Styles**      Traditions have generally obtained in each generation and fashion as to what materials should be used in various parts of the house and how to use them. The original ideas

**Change With the Customs**

which went to establish these traditions or manners differed in their origins, but were always the logical outcomes of times in which they were developed. For instance, the walls of the house in the Italian Renaissance were of stone. Steel was not thought of and wood unsuited, while in American Colonial days wood was the most plentiful material and the quickest and easiest to handle in building in the manner in which the people lived.

At various times climate, geography, religious and social customs and the developments of science or art have changed conditions, and with this, methods and materials have undergone similar changes.

Floors, for example, have mostly been of clay, stone, tile or wood, dictated by one or more of the modifying influences of which we have spoken. Wood cannot take the place of stone, neither should it try to pretend to do so, but there is no denying that one is better than the other under certain conditions and that neither is the only good floor under all conditions.

Linoleum as a floor is not a substitute for stone, wood, tile or clay. It is another material, recent in conception and suited to particular conditions, because of properties that neither stone, clay nor wood have in exactly the same proportions.

**Where Linoleum May Be Suitable and Desirable**      Like other floors in modern houses, linoleum ought to combine the qualities of sanitation, comfort, durability to fulfill completely its functions. When made to conform to these ends—as it does if properly designed, and then selected and arranged so as to harmonize perfectly with its surroundings—it is not only

suitable but desirable. Linoleum is sanitary, because the most obvious thing about it is the ease with which it can be cleaned and kept clean.

Linoleum is comfortable, because it is soft, quiet and resilient underfoot. It is economical, because it is durable.

In parts of Europe, the artistic possibilities of linoleum have been developed to such a degree that many fine homes are furnished throughout with floors of that material. There is no reason why, in this country, the development of the art side of linoleum should not follow the general development of interior decoration. For patterns and colors, suitable for any scheme of house furnishing and decoration, seemingly can be produced.

THE END

## ARMSTRONG'S LINOLEUM FOR EVERY ROOM IN THE HOUSE

While the principles and valuable suggestions on home furnishing and decoration, set forth by Mr. Parsons in the previous pages, are fresh in your mind, let us show you how well the idea of Armstrong's Linoleum for every room in the house fits in with all that you have just read. It will take only a few minutes to go over your whole house—room by room—and the facts you will learn will be exceedingly worth your while. Let us first step into the living-room.

### For the Living-Room

We start with the living-room first, because it shows the possibilities of Armstrong's Linoleum at their best. The very name—*Living-room*—suggests comfort, ease, and beautiful and artistic surroundings. You can procure Armstrong's Linoleum in patterns and colors that will harmonize perfectly with the walls, ceilings, hangings, furnishings and rugs. It will add distinctly to the comfort and livable qualities of your living-room, and it will make a floor there that you will be proud to show to visitors.

Say that the wall is of panelled wood (or suitably papered), making an appropriate background for the tapestries, chairs, table, couch, bric-a-brac, lamps and rugs. In that case, you could ask for nothing better for your floor than one of the Parquetry Inlaid designs, or one of the new Jaspé (moiré) effects of correct color and pattern to match everything else in the room. (See Colorplates Nos. II and IX.)

Such a floor looks like hardwood, can be polished like hardwood, but is more practical and less expensive than hardwood because it is easier to lay and easier to keep clean. It is just as durable, and is much more comfortable because of its quiet, soft resilience underfoot. Running an oil mop over it daily with an occasional waxing usually suffices to keep such a floor clean and sanitary, because it presents a smooth, unbroken surface with no cracks or crevices for dirt and germs. Recent experiments have shown that the linseed oil in genuine linoleum is poisonous to germs. It tends to kill practically all the species that cause dangerous diseases.

**For the Hall**

The hall is the first place that visitors see in your home. It must be kept speckless and spotless. Under ordinary conditions, that means constant sweeping, scrubbing and polishing—tasks beyond the strength and inclination of most women. But it is so easy to keep Armstrong's Linoleum fresh and inviting that a hall floor composed of that material proclaims the neatness of the housewife to all visitors the moment they cross the threshold. Yet it is no tax on any woman to keep such a floor looking that way. (See Colorplates Nos. I and IX.)

No matter what the decorative treatment of your hall, we remind you again that Armstrong's Linoleum will provide rich, polished floors in mellow tones that will harmonize perfectly with rugs, walls and furniture. The range of colors and designs for halls, dens, libraries, sun parlors or conservatories is amply wide for all purposes, all tastes. The durability of good linoleum is another factor. The number of footsteps it would take to wear it out could never be estimated, and dripping umbrellas and wet rubbers do not damage it.

**For the  
Dining-Room**

An attractive place to eat in is half the sauce to appetite and good digestion. You may enter such a room jaded, dispirited, with no desire for food. But if your sense of artistic fitness is gratified by the furnishings and decorations—if the general spirit of the room is one of invitation and good cheer—you are refreshed and re-stimulated. And you find yourself turning with real relish to your food and table companions. On the other hand, uncongenial, disquieting surroundings are sure to have a depressing effect on your appetite and digestion.

Here again, the problem is to relate the floor to the walls, the furniture, the rugs, and everything else in the room. Fortunately, however, the wide variety of Armstrong patterns simplifies the problem with regard to any type of dining-room. The plain linoleums (without any pattern) can be had in tan, blue, green, brown, rose, light gray or dark gray. The Jaspé patterns show grains running through them as charming and fascinating as watered silk. The designs range from the simple and unobtrusive to the most elaborate.

Armstrong's Linoleum floors are smooth, and, of course, their sanitary and long-wearing qualities, and the ease with which they can be cleaned and kept clean, especially commend them for dining-room use. Remember that your servants, as well as yourself, will appreciate Armstrong's Linoleum floors throughout the house. (See Colorplates Nos. III and IX.)

**For the Bedroom** On one of the preceding pages of this book, Mr. Parsons has well pointed out that sound, refreshing sleep is most possible in a bedroom, the atmosphere of which suggests coolness, restfulness and perfect aloofness from the busy, noisy world outside. And he also points out that such a room should be softly beautiful and refined. And, of course, it is obvious that the room in which you sleep should be kept absolutely clean and sanitary.

With these considerations in mind, you yourself must often have thought of linoleum as the natural, logical floor for a bedroom. For if the general furnishings and decorations are softly beautiful and refined, you can obtain Armstrong's Linoleum in colors and patterns that also are softly beautiful and refined. We call your attention particularly to the matting and carpet effects, and the Plain and Jaspé Linoleums in light shades of tan, gray, rose and blue. You will find linoleum not one whit colder than hardwood, since naturally you will continue to use fabric rugs beside the bed, in front of the dressing table, etc.

If the present coverings on the floors of your bedrooms are so hard to keep clean that *they are seldom thoroughly cleaned*, they are in themselves the most powerful argument for the cleanly and sanitary qualities of Armstrong's Linoleum that possibly could be offered. Remember also that Armstrong's Linoleum is relatively easy to install, and that in the long run it makes the most economical floor for every room in the house. (See Colorplates Nos. V and X.)

**For the Bathroom** Water is always being spilled on the bathroom floor. It rots carpets and rugs. It gets into the cracks of tiling and in time may cause the tiling to come up. What is most needed in a bathroom, therefore, is a floor

that is proof against moisture, easy to clean, sanitary, comfortable and exceptionally durable. And it certainly should not be a floor that you would be ashamed to show visitors. Rather it should not suffer from comparison with the floor of the room from which it leads.

The designs of Armstrong's Linoleum which are offered for the bathroom combine cleanable, sanitary, comfortable, durable and beautiful qualities in the highest degree. (See Colorplates Nos. V and IX.)

**For the Nursery** Your first thought for the nursery, or children's playroom, is that it shall be sanitary. Most of the time, the children are running, romping, rolling or tumbling over the floor. If there are cracks and crevices there to hold dirt and germs, the health of the little ones is imperiled. But Armstrong's Linoleum is practically germ-proof and has no cracks for dust and dirt to lodge in. It is a tough, elastic floor that wears well under scuffling feet, that breaks falls, and that has no rough edges to damage dainty dresses. We want you to know the cheery, dainty colors and patterns especially designed for the children. (See Colorplates Nos. VI and X.)

**For the Sun Parlor and Sleeping Porch** Many people do not consider a house complete nowadays unless it has a sun parlor and a sleeping porch. And here again, to secure a thoroughly satisfactory floor is a troublesome problem, but linoleum solves it nicely and economically. Laid properly (as explained further on in this book) linoleum is well-nigh waterproof, and the wide range of colors and patterns makes it easy to select a floor that will harmonize with the furnishings and trim. Granite Linoleums, which resemble terrazzo, or some neat tile effect, will be found especially pleasing in sun parlors. The colors in Granite Linoleums go through to the back. (See Colorplates Nos. VIII and IX.) The use of linoleum on open porches constantly exposed to the weather is not recommended.

**For the Kitchen and Pantry** Spotless and sanitary are adjectives that associate naturally with the nouns, kitchen and pantry. If your kitchen or pantry floor is the kind that requires frequent long and hard sessions with the

water pail and scrubbing brush, it is time that you changed to a linoleum floor. Occasional waxing, and daily wiping with an oil mop or cloth, keeps such a floor as spotless and shining as the proverbial Dutch kitchen (unless there is an unusual amount of dirt tracked in). And the bright, handsome Armstrong designs help to make your kitchen a more cheerful place to work in. And isn't that important for any woman who has to spend a good deal of her time there? If that woman happens to be yourself, your health and spirits will be the better for Armstrong's Linoleum on the kitchen floor. If it is the hired cook or scrubbing woman, she will be all the more likely to be contented with her surroundings. As a final point, you know how quickly the average kitchen floor or floor covering wears out. For that reason, the exceptional durability of good inlaid linoleum is a point worth keeping in mind. (See Colorplates Nos. VII and IX.)

**For Vestibule,  
Laundry and  
Closets**

All the points just mentioned hold equally true for vestibule, laundry and closets. Armstrong's Linoleum will provide floors that are comfortable underfoot, sanitary, durable and easy to clean. A wide variety of both inlaid and printed patterns is offered for such purposes. A few such are reproduced on Colorplates Nos. IX and X. Your local merchants can show you the complete line.

**Used for Years  
in Europe**

The idea of installing linoleum floors all over the house is not new; it is one of the excellent hints on home building that has come to us from Europe. There for many years the material has found ready acceptance in bedrooms, living-rooms, dining-rooms, etc., not alone in homes of moderate means, but just as frequently in those of the rich and well-to-do. Foreign makers have catered especially to such uses, but beautiful as their patterns are, we confidently believe that for beauty, attractiveness and general utility, the Armstrong designs now available for every room in the house have never been excelled. Each year new effects are being offered, and the American housewife is rapidly coming to realize the advantages of linoleum floors from both an artistic and utilitarian standpoint.

### **The Advantages of Linoleum Floors**

By way of summing up, consider for just a moment what the qualities are that you really need and demand in the floors in your home. Certainly you want your floors to be durable.

And is there any floor you can think of—cost considered—that can approach a good linoleum in wearing quality? Next, you demand sanitation. Do you know of any floor that excels linoleum in that respect?

Most assuredly you want floors that are easy to keep clean. Have you not found linoleum easy to clean? And you must have comfort. Is not linoleum easy underfoot?

But, you say, we must have warmth, too. Certainly you must. But you would hardly think of leaving the wood floor in your bedroom and living-room bare, would you? No, you use rugs. Follow the same course then with your linoleum floors, and you will find them equally as comfortable as hardwood. In fact, thickness for thickness, linoleum is a better nonconductor of heat than wood is.

Then finally you demand beauty and economy in your floors—and justly so. As for color harmony, hardwood has distinct limitations. Shades of brown and tan are about the only colors that are available. But with linoleum, the range of colors and patterns is well-nigh unlimited, and your floors can thus be made an integral part of your general color scheme. On this point, the color-plates that accompany this book speak for themselves.

As to economy, linoleum floors of good quality are less expensive today than the cheapest hardwood. And they cost less to maintain, too. Given reasonable care and proper treatment, linoleum floors will last indefinitely, without the periodic re-finishing that all hardwood requires.

So you can see for yourself, once you analyze the subject, how remarkably linoleum does combine each and every one of the qualities you want the floors in your home to possess.

**Personal Service** Naturally we want you to be thoroughly satisfied with every piece of Armstrong's Linoleum you put in your house—not only as to the wearing quality, but

in respect to the pattern and color as well. And since the selection of suitable linoleum floors to harmonize with different types of furnishings and color schemes involves the application of the principles of interior decoration, we have organized a Bureau of Interior Decoration with a thoroughly trained decorator at its head to answer any questions you may care to ask about the use of Armstrong's Linoleum in your own home. There is no charge whatever for this service. Write and tell us what your problem is, and we shall do our utmost to help you solve it satisfactorily.

**What Linoleum Is** Linoleum was invented in England in 1863. The name comes from two Latin words, *linum* (flax) and *oleum* (oil). In other words, it takes its name from its principal ingredient, linseed oil. Before it can be used in making linoleum, however, the linseed oil must be oxidized by exposing it to the air until it hardens into a tough rubber-like substance. The oxidized oil is then mixed with powdered cork, wood flour and various gums and color pigments, and the resulting plastic mass pressed on burlap by means of great "calenders" that exert a pressure of hundreds of pounds to the square inch. The "green" linoleum then passes into huge drying buildings, called "stoves," where it is hung up in festoons forty-five feet high, to cure and season. This curing process takes from one to six weeks, depending on the thickness of the material. There are several varieties of linoleum, designated as follows:

- (a) Plain Linoleum—of solid color without pattern—the heavier grades of which are used for covering the decks of battleships, and hence are known as Battleship Linoleum.
- (b) Printed Linoleum, which is simply plain linoleum with a design printed on the surface with oil paint.
- (c) Inlaid Linoleum, in which the colors of the pattern go through to the burlap.
- (d) Jaspé Linoleum, which may be considered a species of inlaid linoleum, since the colors run clear through the fabric. It presents an appearance somewhat like moire silk.
- (e) Granite Linoleum, which is also a variety of inlaid. It has a mottled appearance, resembling terrazzo.

On the colorplates accompanying this book are reproduced examples of each of these five varieties of linoleum, but these patterns do not by any means comprise the entire range in which Armstrong's Linoleum is manufactured. If you do not find a design to suit you among this assortment, your local merchant will be glad to show you the complete Armstrong Line of 380 patterns.

**A Modern Plant** Armstrong's Linoleum is the product of the most modern linoleum mill in America. The ingredients used are carefully tested, the machinery is of the latest type, the operatives are workmen of skill and experience, and the inspections are exceptionally rigid. You can be sure that any piece of linoleum that bears the Circle A trade-mark of the Armstrong Cork Company is of good quality and workmanship, built to last.

**Exposition Award** Armstrong's Linoleum received the Grand Prize at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition at San Francisco—the highest possible award—conferred on no other brand of linoleum, foreign or domestic.

**How to Tell  
Real Linoleum**

Since there are substitute floor coverings on the market nowadays that look like linoleum on the surface, but which are merely felt-paper imitations, it is to your advantage to remember these two easy ways to tell genuine linoleum: First, look at the back and make sure that it is burlap. Second, try to tear it. Imitations tear easily. The safest way is to ask for Armstrong's Linoleum by name and look for the Circle A trade-mark on the back.

**How to Get  
Armstrong's  
Linoleum**

First get in touch with the dealer in home furnishings with whom you are accustomed to trade. If he cannot show you an adequate assortment of Armstrong patterns, write to us, not forgetting to include the merchant's name and address. Then we shall do all in our power to help you solve your interior decoration problems and to supply your linoleum needs. We also shall do everything possible to see that in the future you can secure what you require through your own merchant. As manufacturers, we cannot sell direct to the consumer.

## HOW TO LAY LINOLEUM

Laid properly, linoleum will last for years, and if given reasonable care, will retain its attractive appearance indefinitely. Because it is to your interest as well as ours to see that your linoleum is well laid and receives proper attention, we ask you to read and note carefully the following directions:

### Skilled Work Required

The laying of linoleum is not a simple task. It requires considerable experience before one learns how to cut the goods to avoid waste and how to lay the material so as to prevent the buckling and cracking that may occur, due to faulty workmanship. Therefore, it will likely prove cheaper in the end, and most assuredly will give you greater satisfaction, if you have your merchant's skilled workmen lay your linoleum for you, instead of trying to do the work yourself.

There is only one absolutely satisfactory way to lay linoleum, and that is to put it down over a layer of heavy felt paper. Ordinary gray builders' felt, weighing  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pounds to the square yard, is the grade used for this purpose.

### The Advantages of the Felt Layer

All floors are subject to expansion and contraction caused by the variations in heat and cold in summer and winter. Wood floors often dry out, leaving cracks. This may in turn cause the linoleum to break or buckle. The heavy felt paper will take up this expansion and contraction, and positively increase the life of the linoleum floor. In fact, the linoleum will last much longer than if laid by unskilled persons in a makeshift manner.

The felt layer acts as a cushion, deadens sound, and makes the floor warm and delightful to walk upon. The linoleum, moreover, can be removed from the floor, if necessary, with little trouble.

### LAYING LINOLEUM OVER FELT PAPER

In putting down linoleum over felt, the felt is first cut into lengths to go across the short way of the room. The quarter-round floor moulding is removed and the felt fitted snugly at each end. A non-waterproof linoleum paste is applied to the under surface of the felt, which is then rolled or pressed down until it adheres firmly to the floor.

The lengths of linoleum are next placed in position crosswise to the direction of the felt strips, or the long way of the room. One piece is laid at a time. The surface of the felt under each strip of linoleum is well coated with the paste, except for four to six inches along each end and side, and along the seams, which spaces are left bare. The linoleum is then

put down and rolled. After the paste has begun to dry, the free edges of the linoleum are trimmed to fit neatly at all points. Then a waterproof linoleum cement (a kind of glue) is applied to the felt along all edges and seams, back under the linoleum for a distance of four to six inches, so as to keep out moisture. The linoleum finally is well rolled with a 150-pound iron roller, to insure perfect adhesion.

Weights, such as pressed brick or sand bags, are placed one against each other, lengthwise, along all edges and seams to press the linoleum firmly against the felt while the cement dries. After twenty-four hours, the bricks are removed, and the floor is ready for use. The floor moulding is put back into place. The result is a neat, resilient, sanitary, waterproof floor. No little skill is required to do this work properly. The additional cost of having it done by an experienced linoleum layer is relatively small.

A less satisfactory way to lay linoleum is to place it directly on the wood or concrete floor. Where a more or less temporary floor covering is desired, as in the case of tenants on short leases, etc., this method may be made to suffice.

#### DIRECTLY ON WOOD FLOORS

The floor should be perfectly dry and clean, the surface smooth and even. Cracks should be filled; nails should be removed; and the uneven edges of the boards planed off, if necessary.

##### Handling the Linoleum

In cold weather, linoleum becomes brittle. If unrolled when in that condition, it is apt to crack. Stand the roll of linoleum, therefore, in a warm room for at least 48 hours before using it. Measure the linoleum carefully, and, if possible, cut it to run in the opposite direction from the boards in the floor. This will tend to prevent long cracks, due to slight unevenness of the floor boards.

After it has been tightly wound in the original roll for weeks or months, it requires some time for linoleum to assume its proper shape, and when laid flat on the floor it must be allowed to "grow" or expand; otherwise, it may "buckle" or crack. To provide for this expansion, proceed as follows:

##### Remove Floor Moulding

First, remove the quarter-round floor moulding from the baseboard all around the room. Then cut the linoleum, trimming it from  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch short at each end just so the edge of the linoleum will be covered by the quarter-round moulding when this is replaced. Along the side walls, the linoleum should not be placed tight against the baseboard, but just as at the ends, a space of  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch wide should be left. The edges of the linoleum at the seams, however, should be butted tightly against each other.

Laid in this manner, the linoleum will have an opportunity to expand underneath the edge of the quarter-round moulding. In replacing the quarter-round, do not fasten it down tight against the surface of the linoleum. The quarter-round must not bind the material at any point, but should be nailed to the baseboard in such manner as to permit the lifting out of the linoleum easily should retrimming become necessary.

Should a buckle or air bubble develop in the linoleum, it must be smoothed out, and the edge of the linoleum under the floor moulding cut back a trifle. Do not put any brads in the linoleum during the expansion period.

**Fitting Around Pipes and Projections** Care must be taken to fit the linoleum neatly around radiators, waste pipes, doorways, wall projections, etc. Where possible, the gas stove, kitchen range, and other movable equipment should be disconnected and linoleum laid under it.

**Fastening Linoleum** In many cases it will be found that it is not necessary to fasten linoleum to the floor at all, when it has been laid under the quarter-round moulding at the sides and ends. The moulding itself will be all that is required to hold the material in place.

Where it becomes necessary, however, to fasten the linoleum to wood floors, use No. 18,  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch, wire brads. Never use carpet tacks. The brads should be set in  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch from the edge and should be spaced about four inches apart along the edges and three inches apart on seams. The brads should be driven down until the heads are lost in the surface of the linoleum.

#### DIRECTLY ON CONCRETE FLOORS

The only way to fasten linoleum to concrete in your laundry, entry-way, bathroom or on any other concrete floor is by means of paste and water-proof cement. We strongly recommend that you have your merchant do this for you, using the felt underlayer, previously described, for this is the only way to insure thoroughly satisfactory results. But if you should decide to lay the material yourself, follow these directions carefully:

**Floor Must Be Dry** No concrete floor can be considered absolutely dry in much less than three to four months after construction, depending upon the season, weather, and other conditions. Moisture in the floor will inevitably harm the linoleum. It is absolutely essential, therefore, that the linoleum be not laid until the concrete has had time to season and dry thoroughly.

**Fitting the Linoleum** When linoleum is laid over concrete in the manner described here, it is not necessary to allow for expansion, as the fabric cannot expand after it is pasted down. The linoleum should be cut to fit tightly at each end, and around all projections or pipes.

### Laying the Linoleum

The method of laying linoleum over a concrete floor is similar to the final operation of laying linoleum overfelt, as described on pages 36-37. Use Armstrong's Linoleum Paste (non-waterproof) for pasting the center of the linoleum strips to the concrete, and Nonpareil Linoleum Waterproof Cement for gluing the edges and seams to the concrete floor, so as to prevent water from getting underneath the fabric. You can secure the necessary paste and cement from your merchant.

After removing all dirt and dust, apply Armstrong's Linoleum Paste to the concrete floor with a wide brush, to within four to six inches of each side and end of the linoleum strip, which space is left bare for the later application of the cement. Put the width of linoleum in place and roll it out at once, before the paste dries. Repeat the same operation with the succeeding strips of linoleum, butting the edges of the strips together tightly. Trim the ends to fit snugly against the wall. Then lift the edges of the strips of linoleum along the sides and ends and apply Nonpareil Linoleum Waterproof Cement with a paint brush to the concrete floor as far back as the paste will permit. Remove any cement that gets on the surface at once with alcohol. Finally, roll the linoleum with an iron roller (if possible) to insure perfect adhesion.

Weights, such as pressed brick, sand bags or other heavy objects, should then be placed along all seams and edges, and allowed to remain for not less than twenty-four hours. Linoleum should never be laid over concrete floors in basements, unless the concrete has first been thoroughly water-proofed.

## HOW TO CARE FOR LINOLEUM

In Europe, where linoleum is used extensively for bedrooms, dining-rooms, living-rooms, etc., housewives take especial pride in caring for and polishing the material so that their floors always look bright and attractive. Reasonable care and proper treatment will add greatly to the appearance and the life of your linoleum floor.

**Cleaning Linoleum** As it does not catch dirt readily, sweeping linoleum is an easy task. Going over it once a day with an oil mop will usually keep it bright and clean.

When washing is necessary, use a mild soap and tepid water—not hot. Wash about a yard at a time, rinse it with clear water, and then dry it thoroughly. When washing or mopping your linoleum, never "flood" the surface with water.

Contrary to the idea of some housewives, certain advertised washing powders and scouring soaps should never be used on linoleum, as they contain caustic or alkali, which eat into the surface and destroy the colors.

A good rule is not to use soda, lye, potash, strong soaps or powders of any kind. A good mild soap is all that is necessary.

**Polishing Linoleum** Your linoleum will last longer, and the brightness of the colors will be retained and renewed if you go over the surface every five or six weeks with some good floor wax or polish, such as "Johnson's Prepared Wax," "Old English Wax" or any other good floor wax. A good home-made polish is easily prepared by dissolving under slow heat equal parts by weight of beeswax and turpentine. Care must be taken to prevent the mixture from taking fire while preparing it. When cool, take a little on a cloth and rub it into the linoleum thoroughly, especially at the points of greatest wear. Do not use too much polish of any kind, but rub it in well. It is very easy to keep linoleum clean that is waxed and polished occasionally.

**Heavy Furniture on Linoleum** The castors ordinarily used are apt to cut into the linoleum if the furniture is heavy. Therefore, it is best to substitute *glass or metal shoes*. These sliding shoes have a wide bearing surface and no rough edges. They are made in several sizes, have a similar shank to that on a regular castor, and will fit the same sockets. On chairs, rubber tips will answer the same purpose. Always lay a piece of carpet on the floor, or a board, when moving very heavy furniture, to prevent marring the surface of the linoleum.





The entrance hall of a home is the first index to the characteristics of the people who live there. Therefore, it should be simple, practical, cheerful, hospitable and in perfect taste. The appearance of this hallway suggests these qualities. The pleasing Jaspe Linoleum floor is combined with plain plaster-walls, a beautifully designed stairway, lighting fixtures and other decorative essentials of the simplest kind.—FRANK ALVAH PARSONS.

One may imagine a simple, hospitable, smart or even a "chic" entrance hall any one of which may be in good taste. An ostentatious, sumptuous, common-place aggregation of objects is certainly a convincing revelation of family qualities, best not revealed until the charitable instincts of one's guests are thoroughly aroused. We remember that floors are to walk on and that entrance halls are not museums nor exhibition galleries even in selecting floors.

—FRANK ALVAH PARSONS.

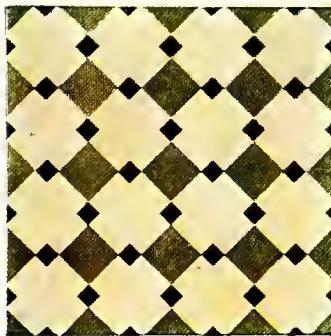


No. 12

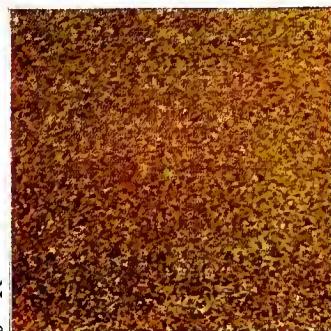
## Hall

## Floor Choices

Armstrong's Linoleum  
For Every Room in the House



No. 652



No. 6



No. 6

Copyright 1918 by Armstrong Cork Company, Linoleum Department, Lancaster, Pa.

No. 6320

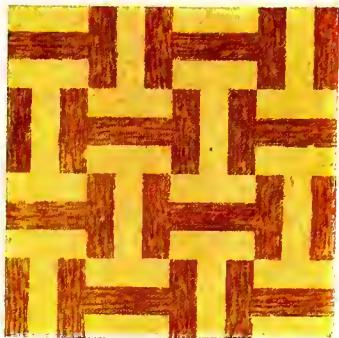


A living-room should be comfortable, practical, restful and companionable. It should also express the culture and taste which are the family's ideals. An inlaid linoleum floor, in parquetry effect, is here shown. With the simple wood-panelled walls it furnishes an exceptionally good background for the expression of these commendable qualities. The rich, but simple color choice lends itself admirably to the type of furniture and other decorative material used.—FRANK ALVAH PARSONS.

No. II

Parquetry Inlaid Linoleum does not seek to imitate a hardwood floor; it seeks to produce the qualities desired at a less expense. Inasmuch as the patterns and colors are successful, it contributes to this end. When the room or its furnishings seem to be out of harmony with the patterns or colors of the parquetry designs, plain tones similar to No. 20 are effective, if not too intense or too light in color.

FRANK ALVAH PARSONS.



No. 680



No. 20

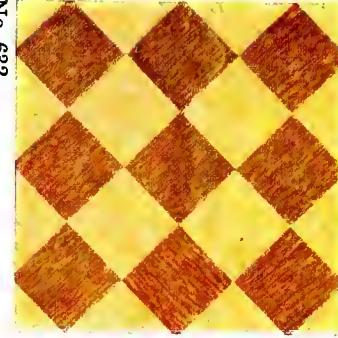
## Living-Room

## Floor Choices

Armstrong's Linoleum  
For Every Room in the House

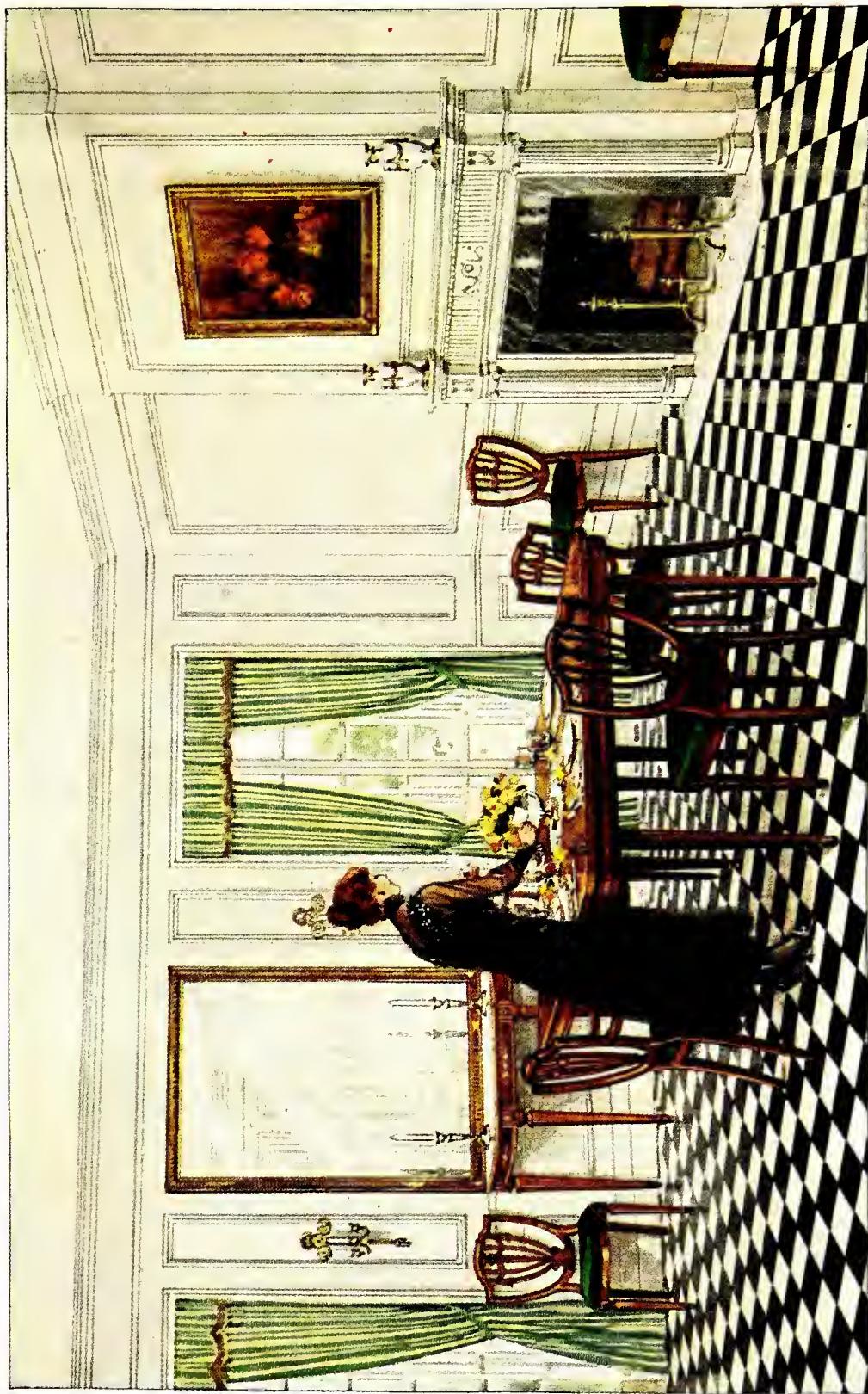


No. 590



No. 632

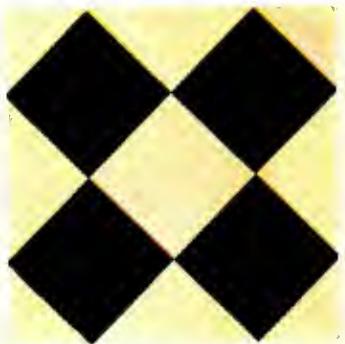
Copyright 1918 by Armstrong Cork Company, Linoleum Department, Lancaster, Pa.



The qualities of cleanliness, cheerfulness and comfort (so necessary to the successful dining-room) are here apparent. The bold black-and-white pattern also gives the feeling of "chic," so admired. At the same time it is a decidedly decorative element. The furniture and hangings introduce the essential decorative color effects. If rugs are used, they should be plain and in harmony with the furniture and hangings. Winter effects may be produced by substituting yellows or soft reds for the greens used here.—FRANK ALVAH PARSONS.

No. III

A dining-room is a place in which to eat in physical and mental peace. Floor suggestions here given have particularly in mind the wide range of qualities that create a mental state of peace and satisfaction in different people. These essentials may range anywhere between the plain and restful No. 24 and the chic and fashionable No. 350, according to temperament.—FRANK ALVAH PARSONS.



No. 350



No. 24

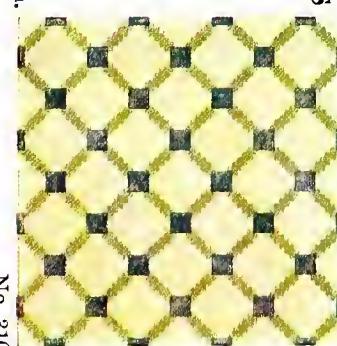
## Dining-Room

## Floor Choices

Armstrong's Linoleum  
For Every Room in the House



No. 310



No. 310





The atmosphere of the library should stimulate feelings of quiet, repose, satisfaction and contemplation. The choice and arrangement of color, forms and lines must all contribute to this end. Books and their uses dictate the selection and placing of furniture. Every room should finally be tested by the principles of form and color composition to see whether they are or may be operative in securing the qualities desired.—FRANK ALVAH PARSONS.

No. IV

It is intended to show by these examples that the floor as an element of the library should be so chosen that the more subtle relations may be easily made between it and the other elements with which it is combined. Undoubtedly well-neutralized plain floors are best for this purpose, with parquetry designs, not too contrasting in pattern often effective, particularly if the floor is to be pretty well covered with rugs.—FRANK ALVAH PARSONS.



No. 20



No. 600



No. 11

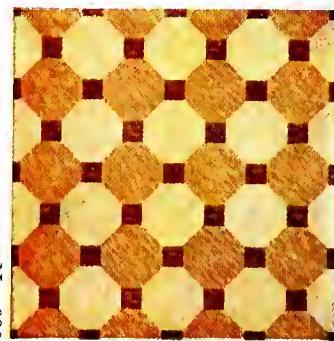
## Library



## Floor Choices

### Armstrong's Linoleum

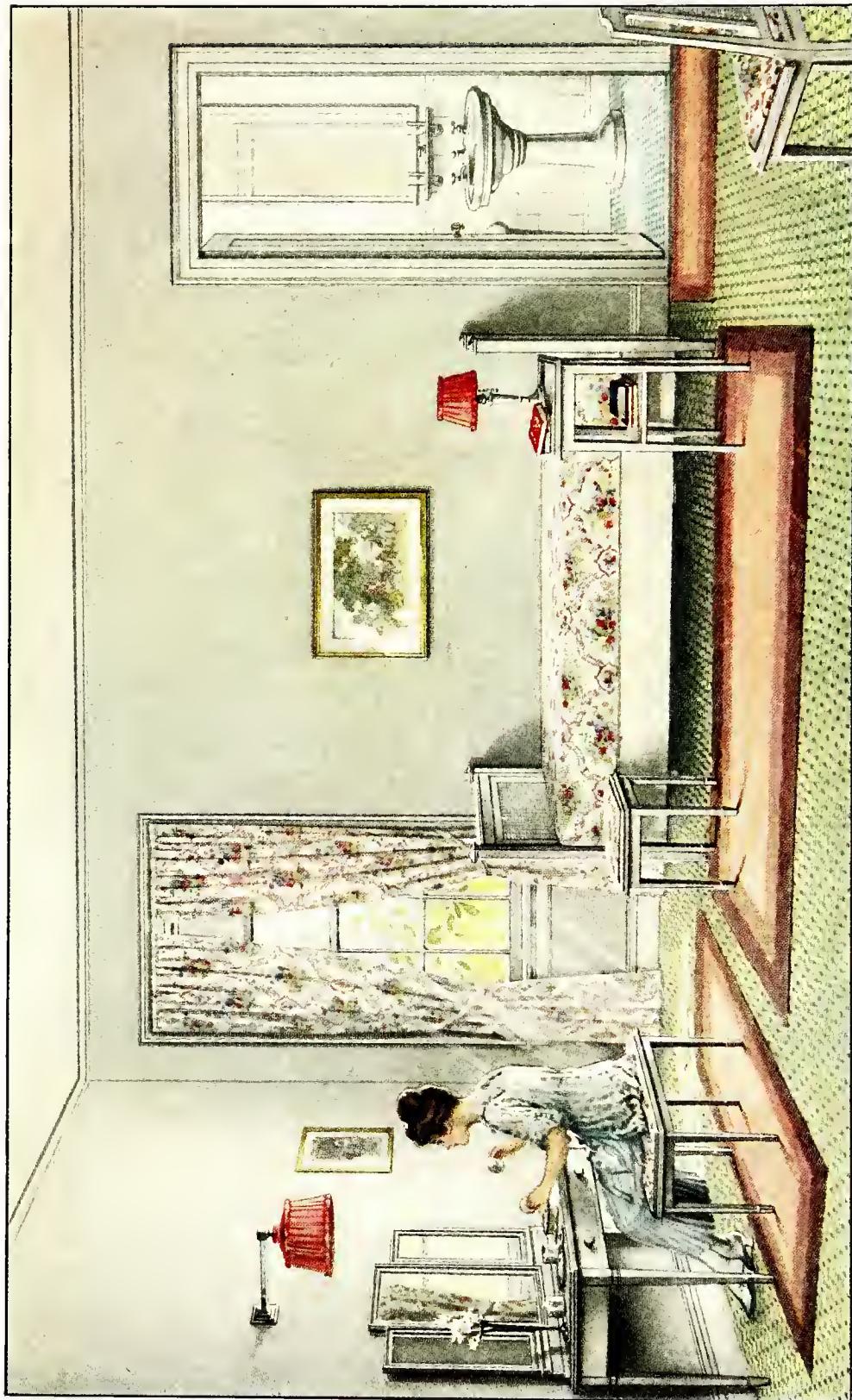
For Every Room in the House



No. 600

Copyright 1918 by Armstrong Cork Company, Linoleum Department, Lancaster, Pa.

No. 662



The soft gray ceiling and walls of this room were chosen to suggest coolness, quietness, cleanliness and comfort. Similarly the soft gray linoleum, with its unobtrusive blue pattern, suits the suggestion as a floor. The chintz hangings with the bed and chair coverings are in harmony with and decorative on, this background. The plain rugs in rose bring the chintz into harmony with the floor, and give the necessary touch of warmth to the room.—FRANK ALVAH PARSONS.

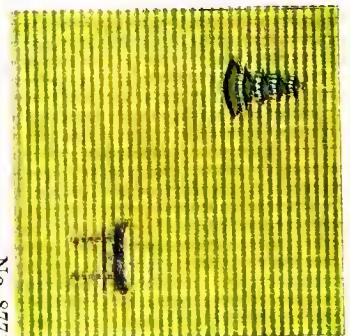
No. V

Four possible patterns are here shown whose qualities are desirable in certain types of bedrooms: No. 8891 for its cheerfulness and restfulness; No. 8971 for its coolness and its decorative quality. Either one contributes the qualities of sanitation and comfort. This method of procedure in selecting at once relates the floor idea to the room, and to the other objects with which it will be used.

—FRANK ALVAH PARSONS.



No. 2252

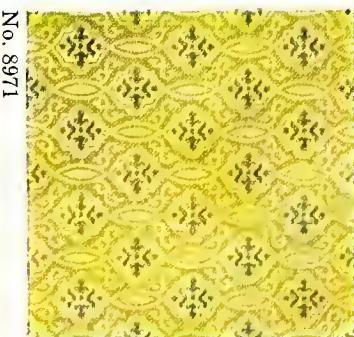


No. 8771

## Bedroom

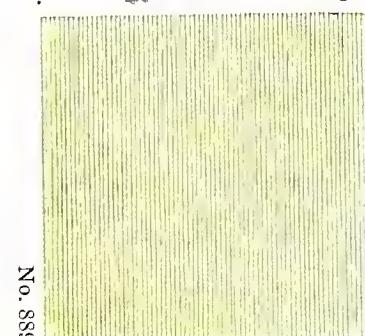
### Armstrong's Linoleum

For Every Room in the House



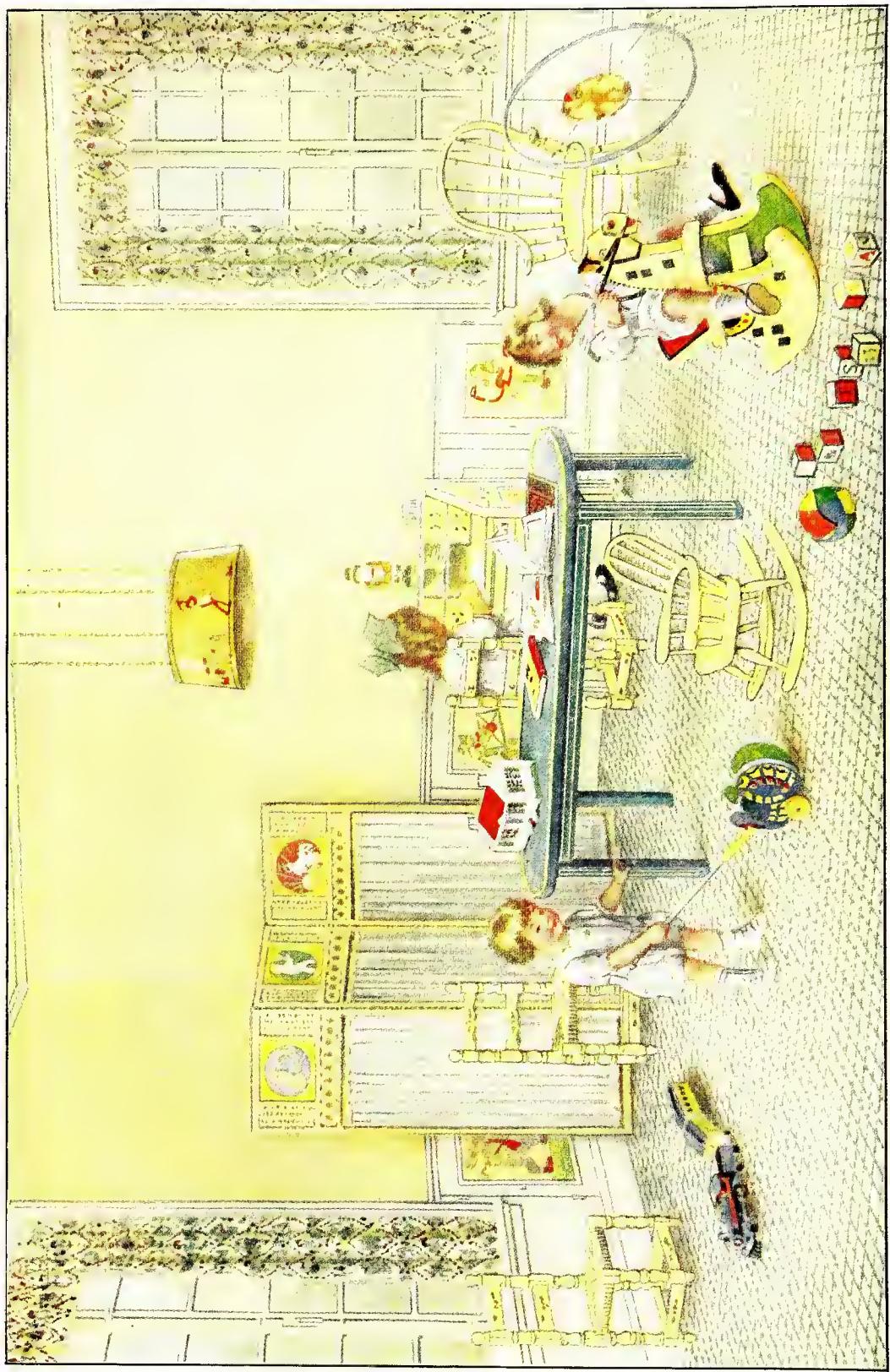
No. 8891

## Floor Choices



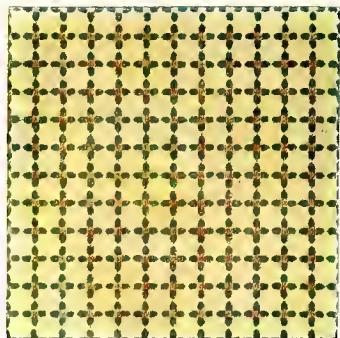
No. 8971

Copyright 1918 by Armstrong Cork Company, Linoleum Department, Lancaster, Pa.



Both the color and the texture of objects used in a child's room should suggest cleanliness, freshness, cheerfulness and durability. At the same time they should represent *his* interests and *his* pleasures. To all these ends linoleum is expressly adapted. The walls, furniture, hangings and toys in this room have been selected to harmonize with these ideas and with the linoleum floor which is ivory, turquoise blue and light gray in color.—FRANK ALVAH PARSONS.

The child speedily reacts to his environment. Correct habits depend upon correct examples in his surroundings. The floor plays no mean part in the scheme of his room and should look clean, bright, simple and attractive as a background for those things in which he is interested. These designs lend themselves to this idea.—FRANK ALVAH PARSONS.

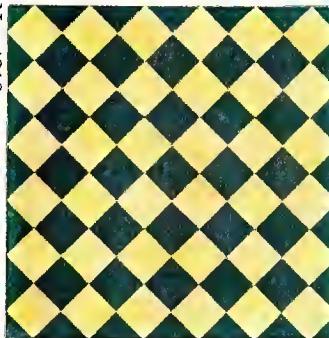


No. 8960

## Nursery

## Floor Choices

Armstrong's Linoleum  
For Every Room in the House



No. 4212

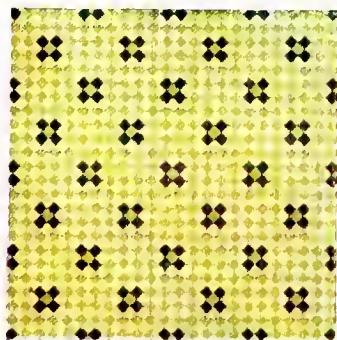
Copyright 1918 by Armstrong Cork Company, Linoleum Department, Lancaster, Pa.

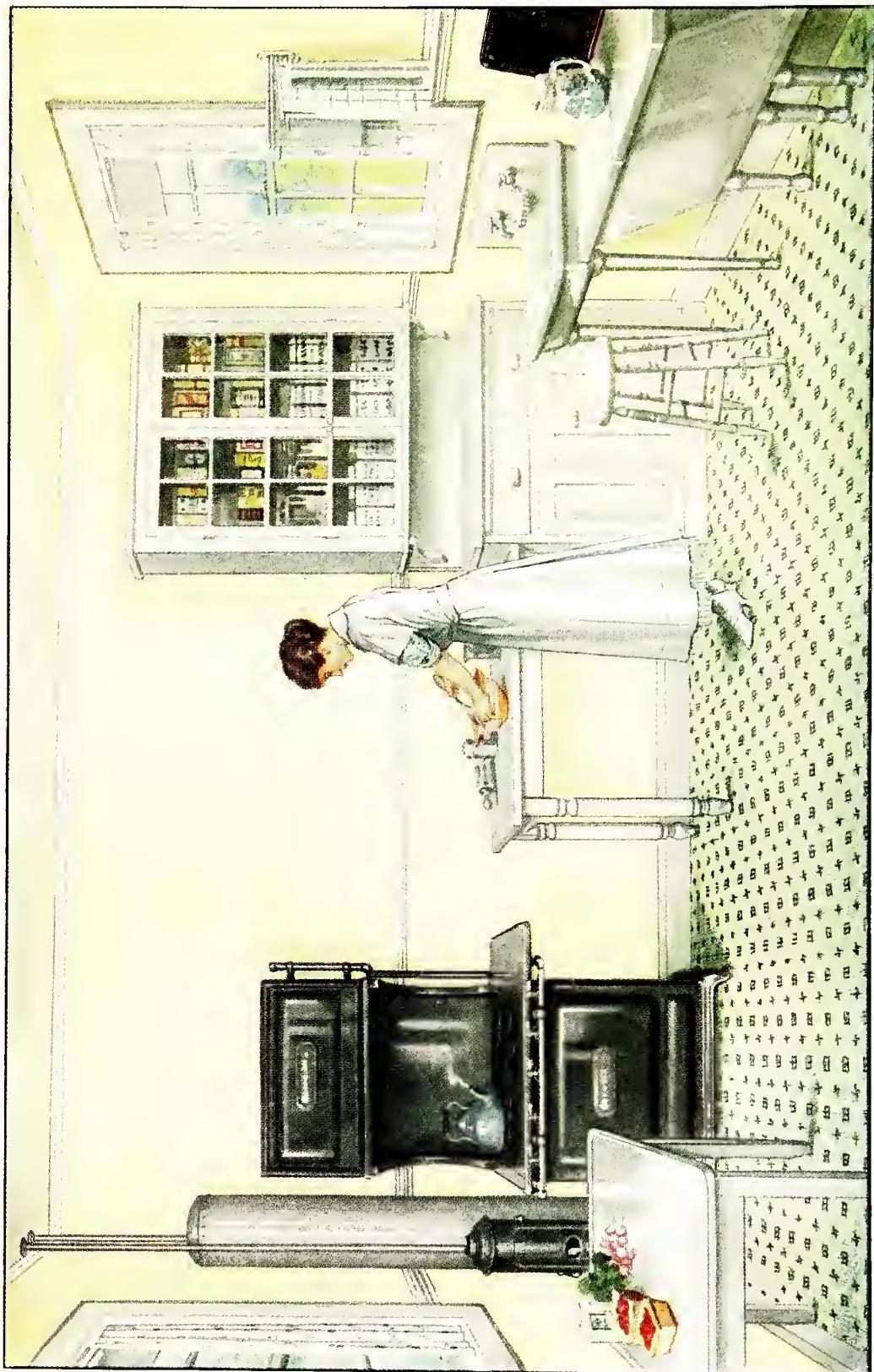


No. 330



No. 8941

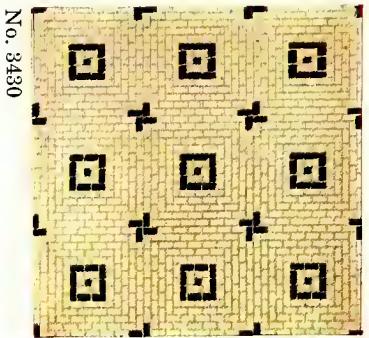




Economy of time, energy and materials is highly desirable in any work-shop. The kitchen (the work-shop of the house) should combine these requirements with the appearance of perfect cleanliness, a workable order or arrangement, and a degree of attractiveness. All the fundamental qualities of a linoleum floor are effective to a high degree in solving this problem. Color plays an important part in the question of sanitation and attractiveness; texture in economy and comfort, while the pattern may be chosen frankly for a decorative effect, making the rest of the room plain in color. White or cream, and light tones of gray are particularly good. Light, soft greens and blues may be well used in sunny and very light rooms.—FRANK ALVAH PARSONS.

That "Cleanliness is next to Godliness" should be indicated by the very looks of every element concerned in the furnishing of a kitchen. These four patterns in combinations of white, cream, gray, light blues and greens are each, in some measure at least, calculated to convey this idea. They relate themselves well also to the prevailing colors in the various necessary utensils belonging to this department of the house. If the trim must of necessity be of some natural wood color, a pattern which introduces a small amount of the same color will serve to relate the walls to the floor.

—FRANK ALVAH PARSONS.

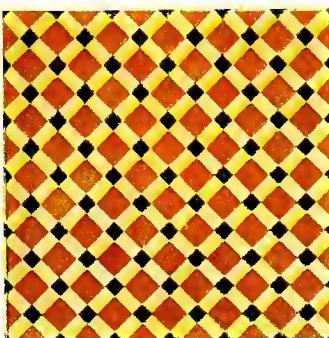


No. 3430

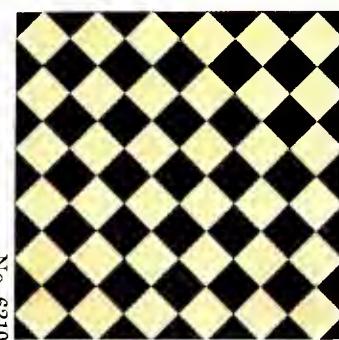
## Kitchen

## Floor Choices

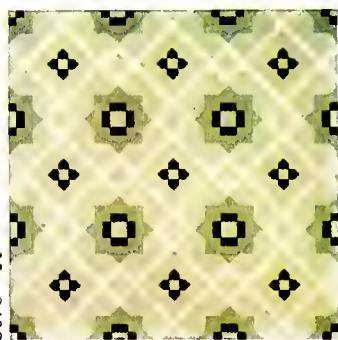
Armstrong's Linoleum  
For Every Room in the House



No. 5002



No. 6210



No. 3402

Copyright 1918 by Armstrong Cork Company, Linoleum Department, Lancaster, Pa.



To get the best and the most out of each room and every article in it, is one of the aims of the modern house. This needs no better proof than the existence of the enclosed porch with its varied functions. It is the happy combination of out-of-door charm with indoor comfort. In this particular porch, a Granite Linoleum floor has been used with inexpensive wood structure and porch furniture to suggest the coolness, cleanliness and simplicity which the warm weather demands. With rugs of soft reds, browns or yellows and chintzes in the same tones, the room at once assumes the warmth and hospitality so necessary in the cooler months.—FRANK ALYAH PARSONS.



## Enclosed Porch

## Floor Choices

## Armstrong's Linoleum For Every Room in the House

For Every Room in the House

4

A close-up photograph of a decorative tile pattern. The pattern consists of a grid of small, square tiles. The tiles are arranged in a diamond-like grid. Some tiles are black, some are yellow, and some are red. The red tiles are arranged in a diagonal line across the grid. The yellow tiles are arranged in a diamond shape around the red tiles. The black tiles are arranged in a diamond shape around the yellow tiles. The pattern is repeated across the entire image.

No. 2092

The image shows the front cover of an antique book. The cover is made of a dark, mottled material, possibly leather or cloth, with a prominent, irregular texture. A faint, blind-tooled rectangular border is visible, enclosing a central design that is too faded to be discernible. The edges of the cover are worn and show signs of age, including discoloration and small white spots (foxing).

No. 23

No. 5

No. 14

Durability, suitability and unobtrusive attractiveness are expressed in the enclosed porch floors shown here. This problem calls particularly for simplicity in pattern, allowing of strong decorative effects in the furnishings. It is also desirable that the colors used should be sufficiently grayed to allow of change in hangings and rugs for warmth and color.

## Armstrong's Carpet Inlaid Linoleum

## Armstrong's Inlaid Linoleum

## Armstrong's Parquetry Inlaid Linoleum



Carpet Inlaid Linoleum is especially designed for living-room, dining-room and bedroom floors. It comes in one grade only—six feet wide. The colors run clear through.

No. 731

No. 730

No. 721



No. 591

No. 601

No. 611

No. 670

No. 6505

No. 3340

No. 611

No. 651

No. 0171

No. 6361

No. 5005

No. 3340

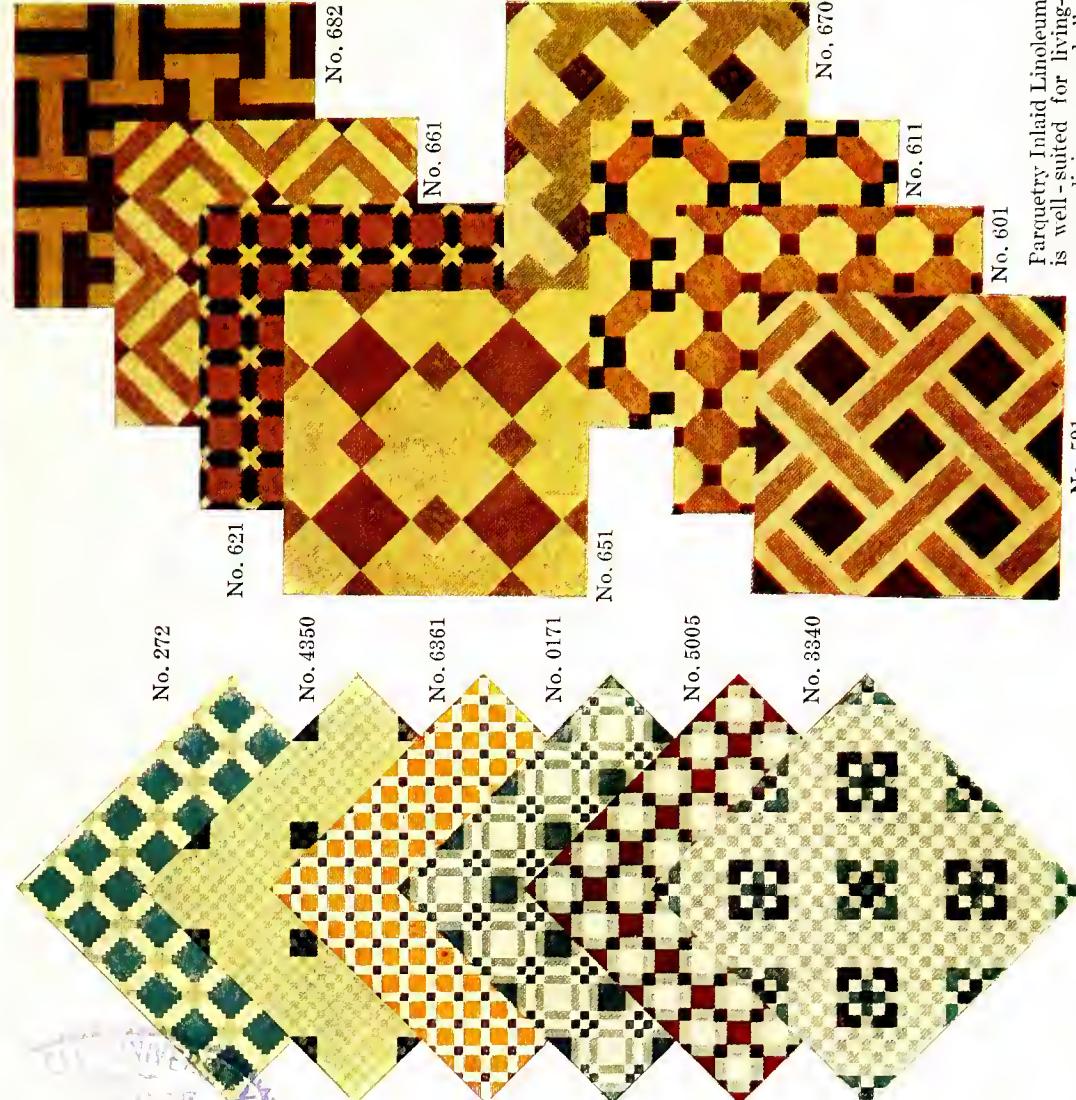
No. 272

No. 621

No. 4350

No. 661

No. 682



The Armstrong Line includes 125 inlaid designs, such as these, suitable for kitchen, pantry, laundry, bathroom, vestibule, etc.

Parquetry Inlaid Linoleum is well-suited for living-rooms, dining-rooms, halls, libraries, dens, etc. The pattern does not wear off, as the colors run through the fabric.

## Armstrong's Plain Linoleum

## Armstrong's Granite Linoleum

## Armstrong's Jaspé Linoleum



Waxed and polished, Armstrong's Plain Linoleum provides a thoroughly sanitary floor on which to throw fabric rugs, in every room in the house. It is made in seven thicknesses, the heaviest being  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch thick. The colors go clear through the fabric.

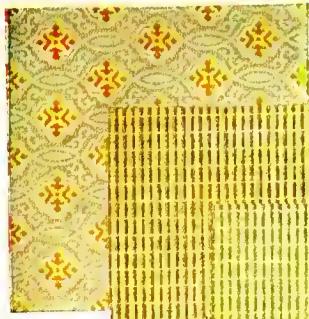
Granite Linoleum is well-suited for sun-parlors, vestibules, laundries, etc. It is made in one thickness only. The colors go through to the back.

The colors in these Jaspé Linoleums run through to the back. They make remarkably artistic floors on which to throw fabric rugs, which cost much less than hardwood. They are made in six thicknesses.

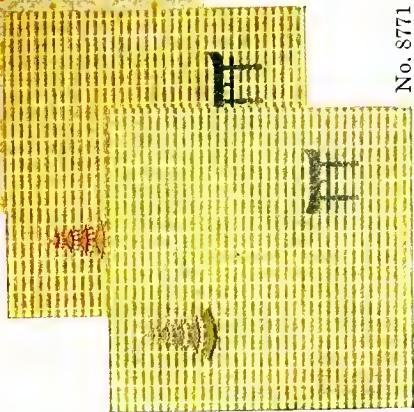
# Armstrong's Printed Linoleum

for Bedrooms and Nurseries

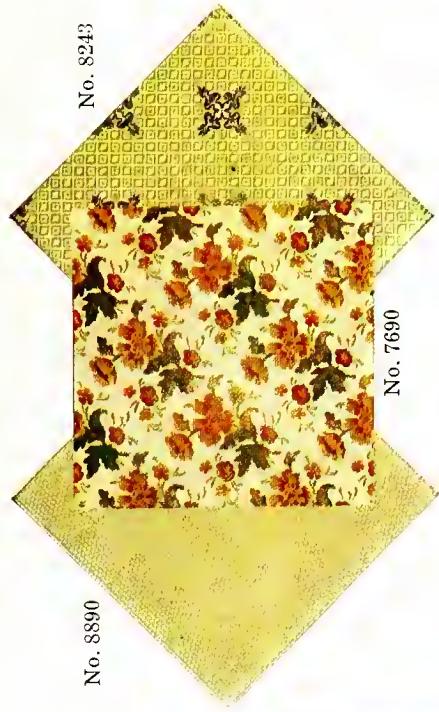
No. 8970



No. 8772



No. 8771



No. 7890

In buying linoleum, always look  
for the Circle A on the back

**Armstrong's Linoleum**  
For Every Room 



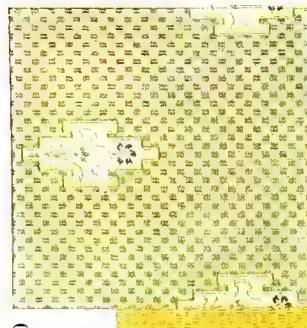
No. 8943

No. 8940



No. 8942

No. 7920



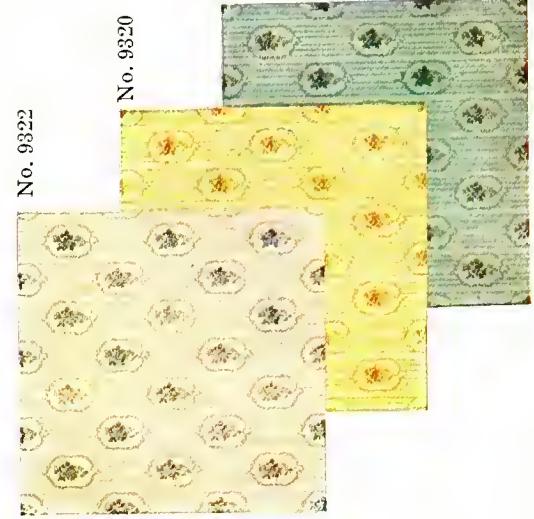
No. 7920

No. 7921



No. 7921

No. 7923



No. 9320



No. 9322



No. 8990

No. 8800

No. 8992

No. X

In bedrooms and nurseries, a good printed linoleum—used as a base for fabric rugs—will last for years. It is thoroughly sanitary, easy to clean and no colder than hardwood. Some of the attractive matting, floral and carpet effects now available are reproduced on this page. Your merchant will be glad to show you the complete Armstrong Line of 380 patterns.

No. X

FIGURE

## Armstrong's Printed Linoleum

The Chinese carpet pattern shown here is proving popular. Fabric rugs, used in connection with it, should be plain.



No. 8921



No. 8920

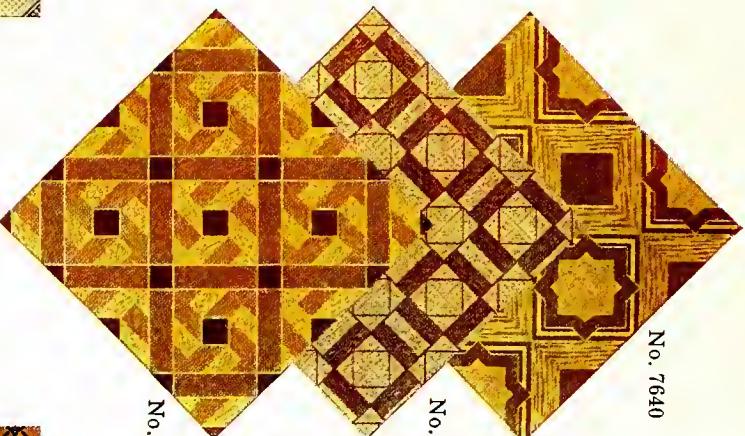


No. 8922



Linoleum Rug No. 861

Made in two other colorings



No. 8861



Linoleum Rug No. 883

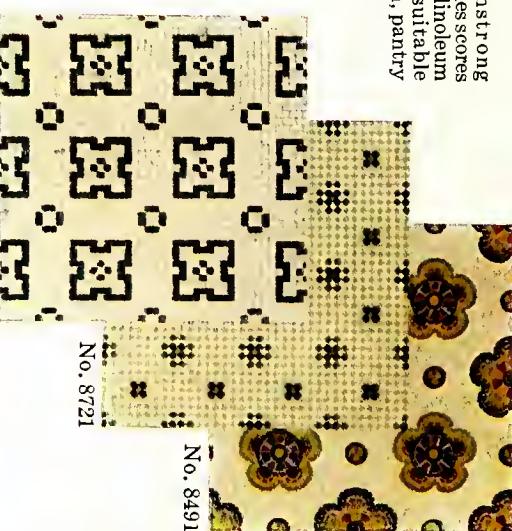
Made in three other colorings

Close representations of hardwood may be secured in Armstrong's Printed Linoleum in a wide assortment of patterns.



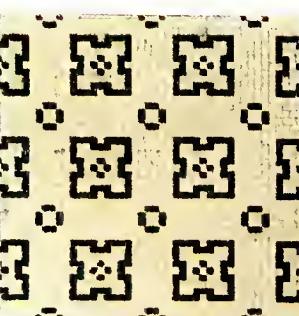
Linoleum Rug No. 873

Made in four other colorings

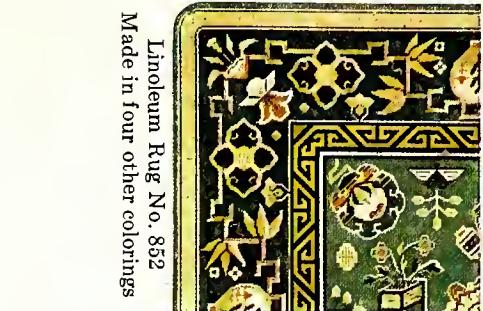


No. 8491

No. 7871



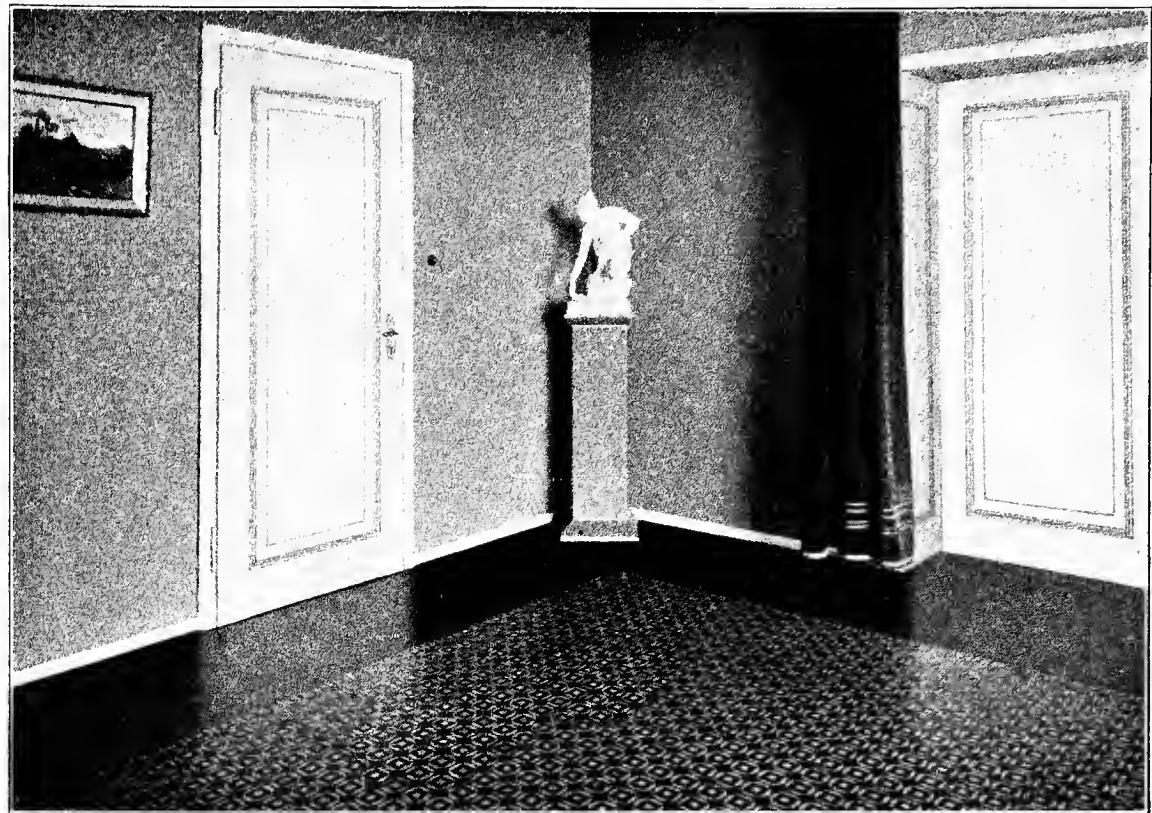
No. 8721



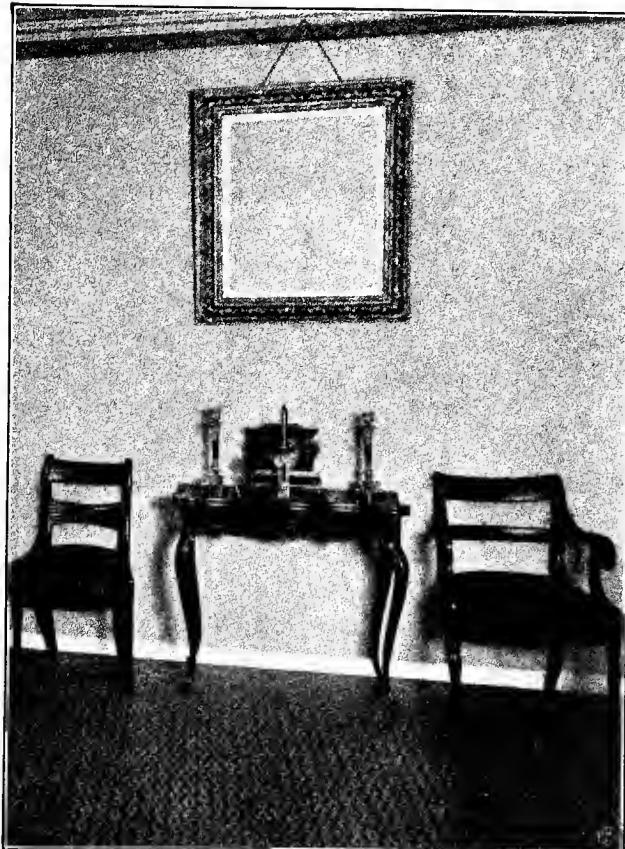
Linoleum Rug No. 852

Made in four other colorings

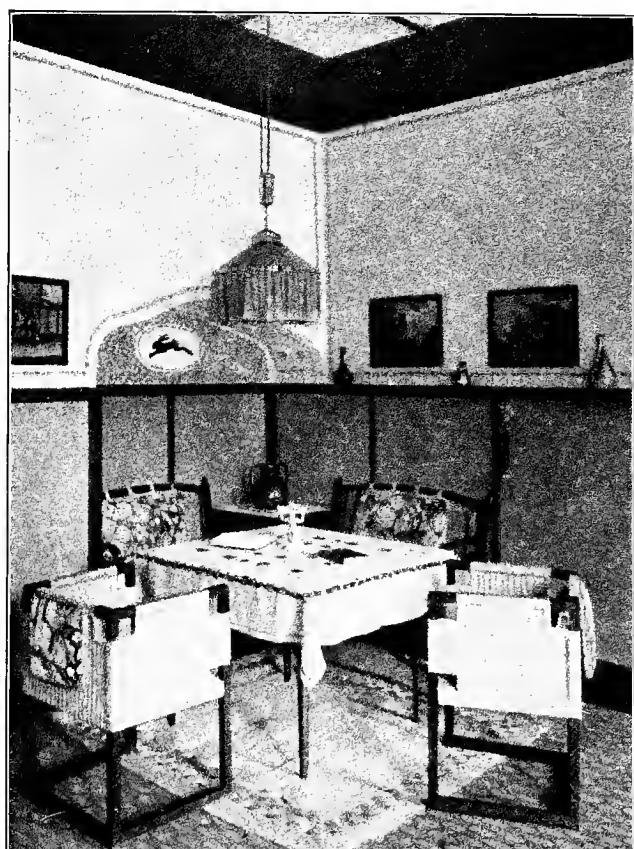
Armstrong's Printed Linoleum may also be secured in rug form, four patterns being shown here. All these rugs come in three sizes; viz., 6x9 ft., 7 1/2x10 1/2 ft. and 9x12 ft. Your merchant will be glad to show you the complete line.



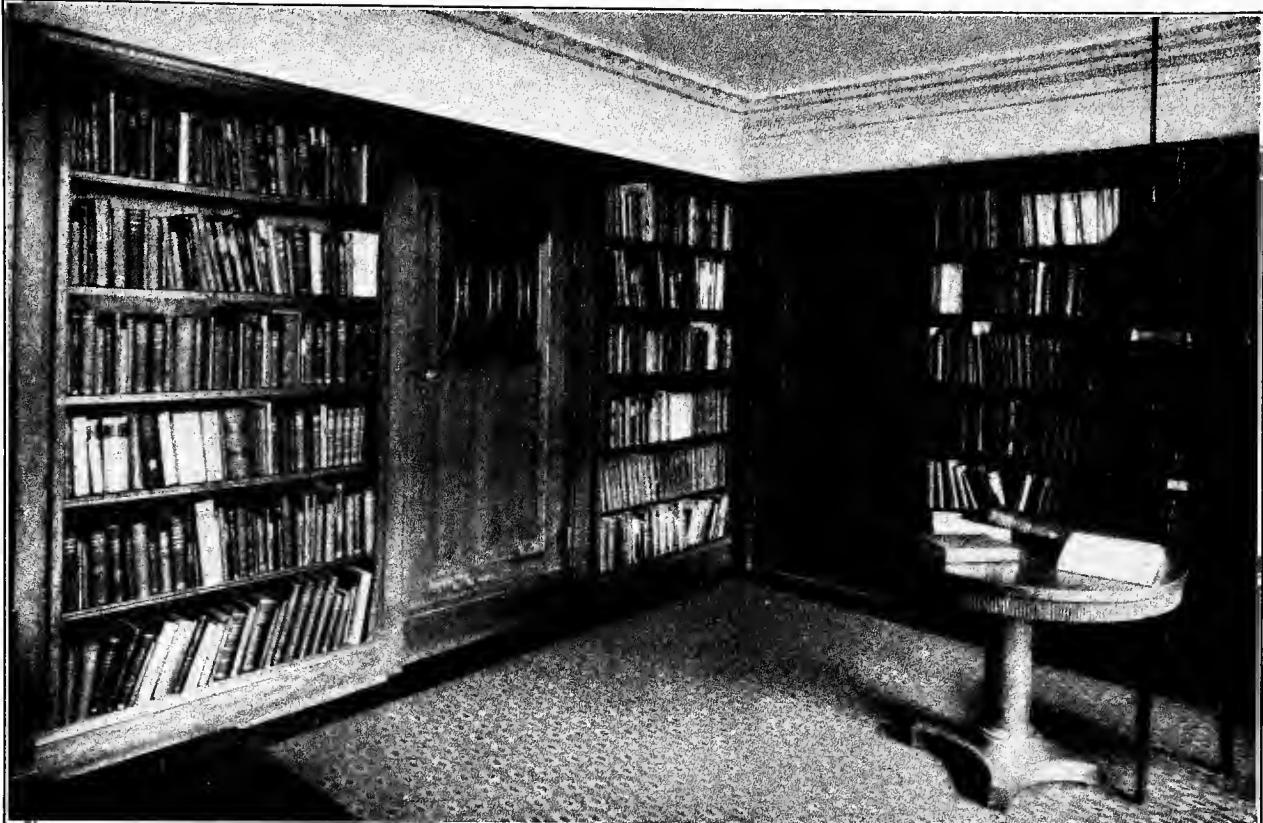
Reception room in a fine residence in Europe. The linoleum used is buff and black, with a dark plain border



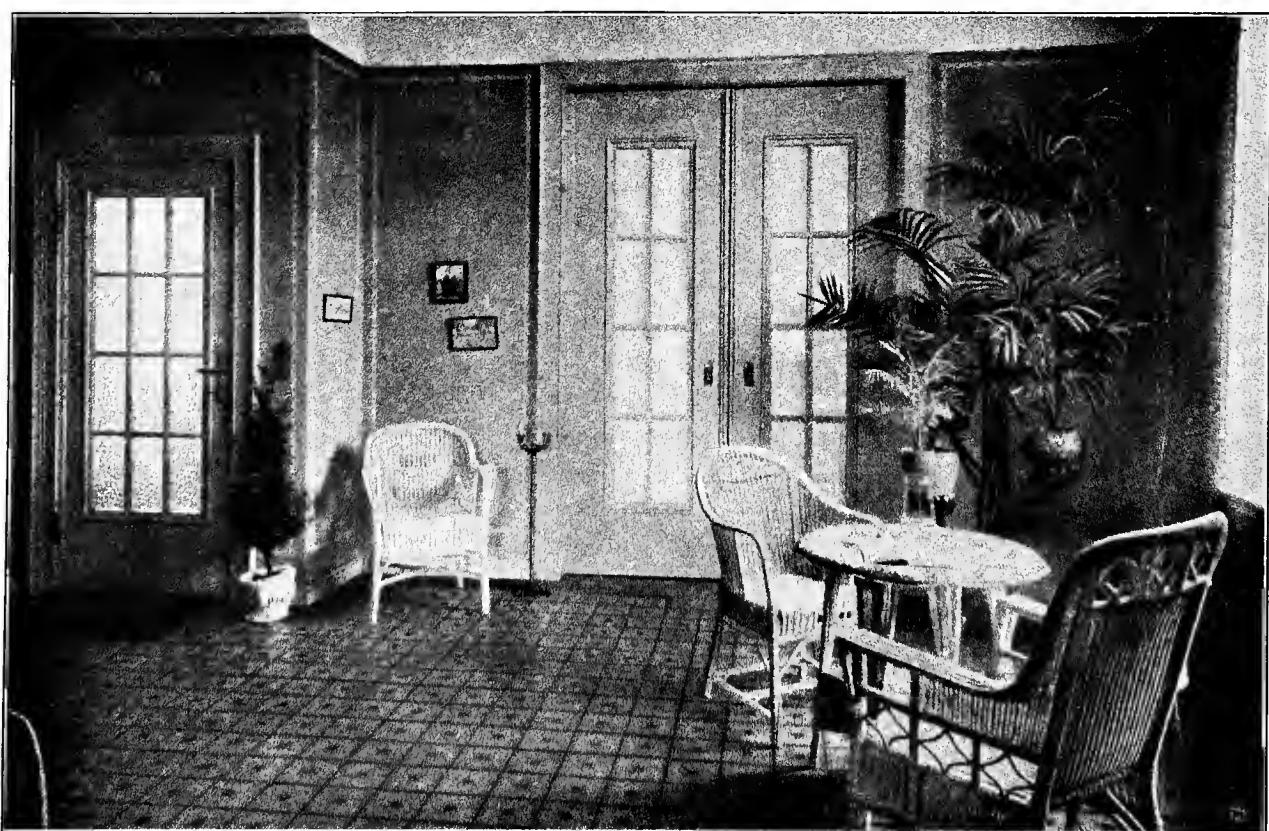
A European hall. The linoleum floor is a subdued pattern in greens and black



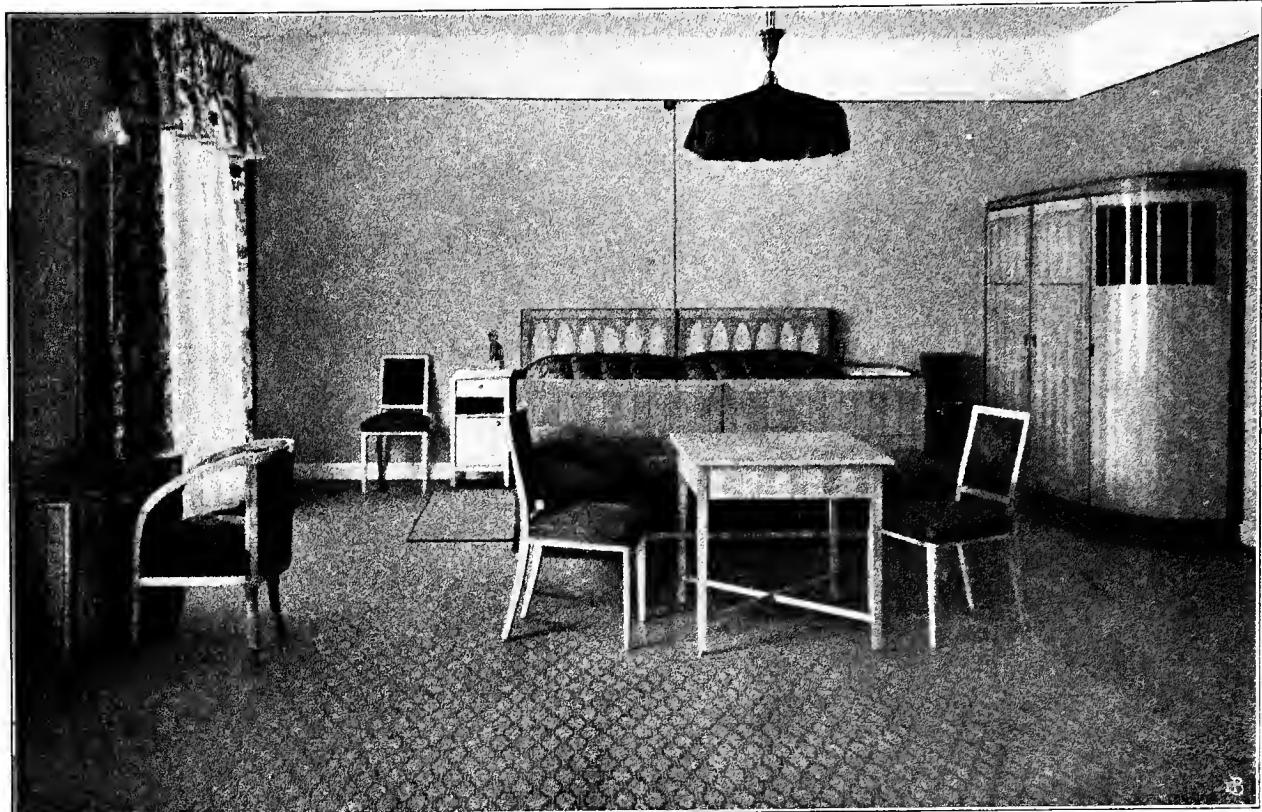
Children's room in a private residence on the Continent. The linoleum is a soft pale green and brown



A library in Europe, showing an effective use of a small linoleum pattern, with a plain linoleum border



Reception room in a European residence. The linoleum is gray and black



Master's bedroom in an aristocratic mansion in Europe. Note the perfect fitness of the linoleum floor in the general scheme



Child's bedroom in a villa in Switzerland. The delicate pattern of the linoleum is indistinguishable in the photograph



An enclosed porch facing the garden of a residence in Europe. The linoleum is an unusual design in two tones of blue



Hall in a European residence, with a quiet, subdued linoleum pattern on the floor











